

Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei

# Pahang & Tioman Island (Chapter)

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# Pahang & Tioman Island

09 / POP: 1.45 MILLION / 36,137 SQ KM

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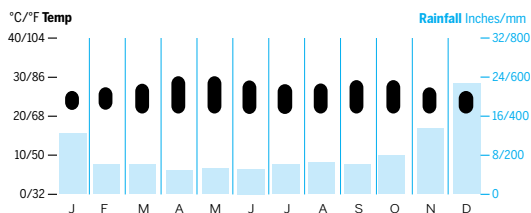
## Why Go?

Pahang, Peninsular Malaysia's largest state, is home to some of the country's most accessible outdoor action. It holds the region's grandest jungles and is bordered by 209km of surfable sandy beaches and the near-perfect tropical island of Tioman. A three hour drive from Kuala Lumpur brings you to the primordial national park of Taman Negara, with elusive elephants and tigers within its tracts of virgin jungle. If you're coming from Singapore, the green peaks and blue waters of Pulau Tioman are only four hours away. Those heading down the east coast from Terengganu shouldn't miss a stop at the super-laid-back surf-bum and artist haven of Cherating.

In between these tourism starlets, you will find off-the-beaten-path gems offering pristine jungles, wildlife and flora, Malaysian culture, colonial architecture and culinary delights, many as yet undiscovered by the tourist hordes.

## When to Go

### Endau



**Jan–Apr** The weather is at its warmest and driest and the crowds gather.

**May–Dec** Humidity exceeds 82% and there's intermittent rain.

**Nov–Feb** Monsoon season: some places close; others offer discounts for hardy travellers.

## Pulau Tioman

09

Beautiful Tioman has a near-Polynesian feel to it, with its hibiscus flowers, steep green peaks and turquoise, coral-rich waters. At 20km long and 11km wide, the island is so spacious that your dream beach is surely here somewhere. But this is no secret: the island attracts around 190,000 visitors annually. Fortunately holidaymakers are ab-

sorbed subtly and the island retains an unspoiled feel, with pristine wilderness and friendly, authentic village life.

A short stretch of road runs along the western side of the island from Berjaya Tioman Beach, Golf & Spa Resort to the northern end of Tekek, where it is interrupted by steps before continuing as a path to the end of Air Batang (known as ABC). A winding, newly paved road links Tekek with the dozy east coast idyll of Juara.



PAHANG & TIOMAN ISLAND PULAU TIOMAN

### Pahang & Tioman Island Highlights

- 1** Village hopping, diving, snorkelling and jungle trekking on **Pulau Tioman**
- 2** Getting wet, muddy and covered in leeches in deep, dark and undeniably adventurous **Taman Negara** (p260)
- 3** Exploring and dining in the off-the-beaten-track colonial village of **Raub** (p269)
- 4** Being stared at by curious **Pekan** (p252) locals, who find visitors as interesting as we find their regal architecture and charming *kampung* houses
- 5** Enjoying amazing food in **Kuantan** (p256)
- 6** Relaxing in the beach town of **Cherating** (p257)

## Pulau Tioman



Tekek is Tioman's largest village and its administrative centre. The airport is here, as well as the island's only cash machine. Bear in mind that everything stocked in shops on Tioman is shipped over from the mainland and tends to be expensive (except beer and tobacco), so stock up on essentials before you arrive.

## 👁 Sights & Activities

### Diving & Snorkelling

Many come to Tioman solely to dive – the underwater world around the island offers some of the best (and most accessible) diving and snorkelling in Malaysia. It's also one of the few places in the country where you have a good chance of seeing pods of dolphins.

There is good snorkelling off the rocky points on the west coast of the island, particularly those just north of ABC, but the best snorkelling is around nearby Pulau Tulai, better known as Coral Island. Snorkelling

equipment for hire is easy to find (masks and snorkels are typically RM10 per day) at many places around the island.

There are plenty of excellent dive centres on Tioman, and PADI courses are priced competitively. Expect to pay about RM1000 for a four-day PADI open-water course and RM100 for fun dives.

Established centres include the following:

### B&J

DIVING

(☎013-742 5063, 419 1218; [www.divetioman.com](http://www.divetioman.com)) ABC's B&J has the only diving pool on Tioman and is equipped for doing everything from training novice divers to facilitating divers for experts.

### DiveAsia

DIVING

(☎419 1654; [www.diveasia.com.my](http://www.diveasia.com.my)) DiveAsia has offices in Salang, Tekek and ABC; it offers excellent prices on open-water courses and fun dives.

**Sunrise Dive Centre**

(☎419 3102; [www.sunrisedivecentre.com](http://www.sunrisedivecentre.com)) Sunrise, in Juara, has the best access to the less-visited east coast sites.

DIVING

**Tioman Dive Centre**

(www.tioman-dive-centre.com) Tekek-based Tioman Dive Centre has a stellar reputation with very responsible dive practices.

DIVING

**Ray's Dive Adventures**

(☎019-3308062; [www.raysdive.com](http://www.raysdive.com)) Ray's, which is based in ABC and run by local couple Ray & Chloe, offers a four-day open-water PADI course for RM1100 and has various dive packages as well.

DIVING

**Jungle Walks**

Nautical pleasures aside, jungle filled Tioman also offers plenty of excellent hikes to keep the intrepid landlubber exhausted and happy. You'll see more wildlife here than in most of Malaysia's national parks, including black giant squirrels, long-tailed macaques, brush-tailed porcupines and – if you're out with a torch at dawn or dusk and incredibly lucky – the endangered, nocturnal binturong (bear cat).

The 7km **Tekek to Juara Jungle Walk** offers an excellent feel for the richness of the spectacular interior, not to mention the added bonus of bringing the hiker to beautiful

**WWII DIVE SITES**

Experienced divers won't want to miss two famous WWII era wreck sites 45 nautical miles north of Tioman, the final resting spots of the HMS *Repulse* and HMS *Prince of Wales*. Both sites are astounding for their historical significance and wide array of marine life, but they're challenging – best suited for those with more than a few dives under their belts.

Juara at hike's end. While the walk isn't too strenuous, parts of it are steep, and hiking in tropical heat can be taxing. Carry plenty of water; if you lose the trail, follow the power lines overhead. If you're setting out on foot, be wary of entering the jungle after around 4.30pm, as it's easy to get lost in the dark.

You'll find signs for the jungle walk just about 1km north of the main jetty in Tekek. You can also walk along the recently paved road to Juara, a longer and somewhat less satisfying hike. A car back from Juara will cost around RM90.

The 3.5km **ABC to Salang Trail**, which runs inland from the coast, is shorter but more difficult. The trail isn't well marked, but it does lead to some excellent empty

**CHOOSING A SLICE OF PARADISE**

The hardest part of your Tioman adventure may well be deciding where to go. We've broken the major options down for you, counter-clockwise from north to south:

**Salang** The most backpacker-esque of Tioman's *kampungs*. Come to snorkel off nearby Coral Island, stay for the beach parties.

**ABC** Slightly more upscale than Salang, ABC has a good choice of restaurants and accommodation, though the beach isn't all that spectacular.

**Tekek** Tioman's commercial hub is a good central location from which to explore the rest of the island, and the beach at the southern end of town is lovely.

**Kampung Paya** With two moderately priced resorts offering all inclusive packages, Paya is more popular with Singaporean students and the organised-tour set looking to snorkel off Paya beach.

**Genting** The beach here is fairly built up, but is surrounded by a local village with an appealing *kampung* atmosphere. A good spot for meeting local fisherman.

**Nippah** Beautiful, rugged and isolated, Nippah is an amazing choice for those wanting to bliss out on Tioman's serenest beach. The waters of Nippah are home to phosphorescent seaweed, and actually glow at night.

**Mukut** This traditional *kampung* may be one of the prettiest towns on the island, and the beach is lovely. If it's traditional Malaysian life your after, Mukut is your spot.

**Juara** It's the hardest to get to, but Juara has the best surfing beach in Tioman and enough restaurants and accommodation to make it well worth the trip.

## TRAIL SAFETY

Don't let Tioman's laid-back vibe fool you into thinking you're not in the jungle.

» Carry enough water – many a day-tripper has learned too late the folly of heading out with insufficient fluids. On the subject of water, too much isn't always better than not enough.

» Rethink your hiking plans if it's been raining, especially during monsoon season, when nearly every trail becomes unpleasantly muddy at best and impossible to follow at worst.

» Take a headlamp if you think there's even the slightest chance you'll be out past sundown.

» The Old Testament only mentions one, but this Eden's got serpents to spare: 25 species, including the king cobra and reticulated pythons, have been recorded on the island.

beaches. Climb up to Bamboo Hill Chalets at the northern end of ABC bay for a 10-minute hike over the next headland to Panuba Bay. From here it's another 40 minutes through the rainforest to **Monkey Beach**, before the trail continues from the far end of the beach across the next headland to the white-sand beach at Monkey Bay. From here, it's a long, long, steep climb over the headland to Salang.

An easier 30-minute hike heads south from **Tekek to Berjaya Tioman**, either by the road or by rock-hopping around the headland at low tide. From there you can walk through the golf course; just before the telecommunications tower there is a trail to the deserted beach of Bunut. From the end of the beach, the occasionally faint trail continues over the headland to Paya. The trail from Paya to Genting is easy to follow and there are houses along the way where you can ask directions.

If you head north from Tekek, you can walk all the way to ABC. Boat transport for the return journey can be arranged at most of the guesthouses in ABC or Salang if you don't feel like walking.

Another beautiful but harder-to-reach trek can be found on Tioman's southern tip, Mukut, accessible by boat from Genting. The **Asah Waterfall Trek** leads to a stunning

waterfall with a beautifully polished swimming hole.

## Sleeping, Eating & Drinking

From Salung to Mukut, all towns and beaches with accommodation are serviced by regular ferries from Mersing. Ferries run to Juara run only when tidal conditions allow, and even then only when enough people are going to make it worth the captain's while.

Budget accommodation largely comprises small wooden chalets and longhouse rooms (all in poor condition), typically with a bathroom, fan and a mosquito net. More expensive rooms have air-con and hot showers. Most operations have larger family rooms for those with children, and many have restaurants.

### TEKEK

While the central part of town, with its unsightly twin jetties, characterless marina and shabby duty-free shops isn't scenic, the village is getting gussied up a bit with a large paved waterfront promenade bordered with coconut palms.

All accommodation options lie close to each other on the excellent southern beach.



### Swiss Cottage Resort

RESORT \$\$

(☎419 1642; [www.swiss-cottage-tioman.com](http://www.swiss-cottage-tioman.com); longhouse d fan/air-con RM100-120, garden-/sea-view chalets RM130-150, sea view bungalows RM180;

☎☎) This resort is clearly operated by creative folk. The rooms to nab here are the sea view chalets (RM180), which have breezy bamboo and wood interiors alongside colourfully painted walls and comfy deck furniture. Other options are nestled in a shady back garden, including the newly renovated beachside bungalow. The on-site chill-out spot is the perfect place to hang out after diving with the folks at the also on-site Tioman Dive Centre (p245).

### Coral Reef Holidays

LONGHOUSE \$\$

(☎419 1868; longhouse air-con standard/tw/tr RM130/160/160, dm RM25, d RM45 including breakfast; ☎☎) Adik and Hasnizah's lovely beachfront longhouse has rooms facing the sea, all with individually crafted stonework, raised platform beds, air-conditioning and colour televisions. The couple also offer air-conditioned and fan-cooled dorms, and operate an excellent restaurant serving Western and local food.



**Babura Seaview Resort**

(☎419 1139; [www.baburaseaview.com](http://www.baburaseaview.com); r/chalets incl breakfast RM60-180; 🍽️🍷) This family run place on the end of the beach offers long-house fan rooms and a selection of newer rooms and chalets with air-con and hot-water bathrooms. **Tioman Reef Divers** ([www.tiomanreefdivers.com](http://www.tiomanreefdivers.com)) has a shop here.

CHALET \$

internet cafe that isn't always open during posted hours.

**TOP CHOICE ABC Chalet**

CHALET \$

(☎419 1154; d chalets RM50-150; 🍽️🍷) Swing on a hammock overlooking the sea at this lovely section of beach at the north end of ABC. Accommodation is spread over pleasant, well-tended grounds, with a couple of chalets almost on the beach. The large, pricier chalets come with hot water, air-con, sea views, hot showers, a freezer, and tea- and coffee-making facilities.

**Chinese Sarang Seafood**

CHINESE \$\$

(☎013-706 6484; meals RM20; 🍽️lunch & dinner) This spot does a particularly tasty sizzling hotplate bean curd (RMS) and serves beer.

**AIR BATANG (ABC)**

The beach here is usually best at the southern and northern ends, although the sands are constantly shifting so this is changeable. Most of the beachfront is rocky with little sand.

Internet in ABC is spotty; a few guest-houses have wireless, and **Mokhtar's Place** (per hr RM10; 🕒9am-10.30pm) has a small

**Bamboo Hill Chalets**

CHALET \$\$\$

(☎419 1339; [bamboosu@tm.net.my](mailto:bamboosu@tm.net.my); chalets RM90-140; 🍽️🍷) These six well-kept chalets are in a stupendous location, perched on rocks on the northern end of the beach, surrounded by bougainvillea and humming cicadas alongside a waterfall and pool. They are almost always full, so call ahead.

**TIOMAN'S RESORTS**

Willing to pay for the privilege of not having to carve your own slice of paradise? Tioman has a number of resorts ranging from merely high-end to the downright extravagant. All have exclusive beaches and private jetties. Your best bet with most resorts is to book a package deal in advance, either through a travel agent or through their websites. Note that many of these resorts offer amazing deals (up to 50% off listed price) during the monsoon season (November to February).

**Melina Beach Resort** (☎419 7080; [www.tioman-melinabeach.com](http://www.tioman-melinabeach.com); chalets for 4/5/6/8 people incl breakfast RM200-495) Melina is located on a remote beach of photogenic boulders and white sand. Each sleeping option is unique, creatively designed from wood, thatch and Plexiglas to create a certain Crusoe chic – the most interesting is a tree house that hovers right over the beach. Meals are served at the resort or you can walk for 20 minutes to Genting and try the restaurants there. The owners have set up a successful turtle hatchery, and plenty of activities are organised to keep folks entertained; there's also a beachside bar and BBQ. The relaxed atmosphere attracts lots of families.

**Panuba Inn Resort** (☎419 1424, 07-799 6348; [www.panubainn.com](http://www.panubainn.com); 3d/2n from RM355 per person) Peaceful Panuba Inn, over the headland from ABC, has a pier and restaurant and 30 chalets built on a hill overlooking the bay. Rooms all face the sea, ranging from simple fan affairs to chalets with hot shower, air-con and plenty of mod-cons.

**Berjaya Tioman Beach, Golf & Spa Resort** (☎419 1000; [www.berjayaresorts.com/tioman](http://www.berjayaresorts.com/tioman); d RM407-1800) Berjaya is the biggest resort on Tioman. Its accommodation ranges from chalets and suites to entire villas, not to mention standout attractions including tennis, a football pitch, a kids' playground, donkey rides and an arcade. There's two swimming pools (one with great water slides), four restaurants and a beach bar. And – oh yes – there's golf.

**Tunamaya Resort** (☎238 8881; [www.tunamayaresort.com](http://www.tunamayaresort.com); beach villas RM780, rainforest villas from RM680) New Tioman addition Tunamaya is operated by the same folks who run the highly regarded Tuna Bay (p286) on Perhentian. It was nearly completed at the time of research, and will be ready by the time you're reading this. The resort overlooks white sand beaches and promises high-quality amenities including spas and a bar with beers from around the world.

**Nazri's Place**

CHALET \$\$

(☎419 1329; www.nazrisplace.com; d incl breakfast RM60-180, f incl breakfast RM250; ㊟) Nazri's is at the far southern end of the beach, which has some of ABC's best sand. It has clean rooms and a wide range of accommodation, from budget rooms with air-con (cross a small river to the cheapies at the rear) to deluxe rooms and family rooms in the brick units. The restaurant is right on the water and serves an excellent seafood barbecue.

**Johan's Resort**

CHALET \$

(☎419 1359; dm/chalets/f RM20/40/100) A friendly, welcoming place offering tons of information. The two four-bed dorms up the hillside are decent value; the chalets are pretty much the same as other cheapies on the beach.

**SP Barakha**

CHALET \$

(☎419 1176; chalets RM50-150) Formerly known as South Pacific, this simple, family-run place just north of the jetty has a decent restaurant, laundry service, and a steadily growing library of secondhand books. Owner Tony is a wealth of information on Tioman.

**B&J Dive Resort**

HOTEL \$\$

(☎013-742 5063, 419 1218; www.divietioman.com; tw/tr/q RM250/300/360; ㊟) This is easily the most high-class spot in ABC. All rooms have flat screen TVs, air-con, safes, coffee makers and other mod-cons that'll make you think you're back in a three star hotel in KL.

**Mokhtar's Place**

CHALET \$

(d RM35-55; ㊟) There's a very mellow family vibe going on at this quiet spot on the south end of ABC. Cheaper bungalows are set back from the beach under pleasant shady trees and all rooms are spacious and clean. Internet is (sporadically) available for RM10 per hour.

**Nazri's II**

CHALET \$

(☎419 1375; d with fan/air-con RM80/140; ㊟) Similar to Nazri's Place (p248), but on the north end of ABC and set in a particularly well-tended garden that spreads up the hillside.

**Sri Nelayan Chalets**

CHALET \$

(☎019-732 6373; chalets RM40) This family-run place north of the jetty has four clean, fan-cooled chalets facing a well manicured lawn. The family also owns a small grocery store and arranges tours.

**My Friend's Place**

CHALET \$

(☎419 1150; r RM35) My Friend's Place, south of the jetty, is busy, social, clean and priced a hair lower than the competition. Chalets all face a lovely garden.

**Tioman House**

HOTEL \$

(☎019-704 5096; chalets RM50-150; ㊟) Tioman House, at ABC's north end, offers rooms painted a happy yellow in a classic modern hotel decor.

**oABC Restaurant**

MALAY \$\$

(meals RM10-20; ☺breakfast, lunch & dinner) This restaurant is packed most nights with travellers who flock to enjoy ABC's BBQ special (RM20), a tantalising array of freshly caught fish, prawn or squid. For less adventurous eaters, chicken will have to do. Beer is available.

**Sunset Corner**

RESTAURANT \$

(pizzas from RM16; ☺2pm-late) Last spot before the stairs leading south, Sunset serves beer, booze, milkshakes and pizza. Happy hour is from 5pm to 7pm.

**The Deco Bar**

BAR

(☎2:30am till late) The Deco Bar is usually filled with divers in the evening playing guitar and swapping dive tales. Happy hour is from 5pm to 7pm.

**SALANG**

Salang has more of a party vibe than elsewhere on the island. A very wide and inviting white-sand beach is just south of the jetty and is good for swimming. For many, Salang's star attraction are the monstrous monitor lizards that lurk in the inky river than runs through the village centre.

**Salang Indah Resort**

RESORT \$\$

(☎419 5015; chalets from RM60-185; ㊟) An expanse of chalets seemingly sprawls forever at this resort complex. Most rooms aren't in tip-top condition, but if you look at several you'll probably find one to your liking. The most interesting are the Popeye-like chalets on stilts over the sea (RM120). The mosque-like restaurant acts as a hub of sorts and serves everything from cheeseburgers to cheap local-style seafood (dishes around RM8). There's also a bar, shop and internet access (RM10 per hour).

**Ella's Place**

CHALET \$

(☎419 5004; chalets RM60-120; ㊟) There's usually a lounge-able patch of sand at this cute-as-a-button family-run place at the quiet northern end of the beach. There are



10 clean chalets (some with air-con) and a small cafe.

### Khalid's Place

CHALET \$

(☎419 5317; salangpusaka@yahoo.com; d chalets with air-con RM80; 📍) Khalid's Place is south of the jetty, behind the Salang Complex and across a festering section of Sungai Salang. It has 47 cleanish chalets set in a large grassy area. Accommodation is set back from the beach; air-con chalets come with fridge and hot shower.

### JUARA

Juara is a world of its own. It's the sole place to stay on the east coast of the island and hovers in a constant sleepy state of remote-hideaway bliss. There are two long stretches of wide white sandy beach here (separated by a small hill and boulder outcrop). The northern half of the beach (called Barok) is where most accommodation is found, while the southern strip (known as Menta-wak) is near-deserted and kicks up some of the country's best surfing waves during the monsoon.

Turtles nest on both beaches and the area has been proclaimed a 'green zone' by the Sultan of Johor. This means it is protected from development, including the building of any big new resorts. All the places to stay in Juara overlook the magnificent beach; a few places hire out kayaks (RM15 per hour), surfboards (RM20 per hour) and fishing rods (RM15 per hour).



### Bushman

CHALET \$

(☎419 3109; matbushman@hotmail.com; chalets fan/air-con RM50/80; 📍📍) Nabbing one of Bushman's five new varnished wood chalets, with their inviting wicker-furnished terraces, is like winning the Juara lottery – reserve in advance! The location is right up against the boulder outcrop and a small river that marks the end of the northern beach. Bush-

man's little cafe serves breakfast, lunch and dinner; and is a wondrously languorous place to chill out.



### Beach Hut

HOSTEL \$

(☎012-696 1093; timstormsurf@yahoo.au; camp sites with tent for 2 RM15, dm/chalets RM15/45/55) By the time you read this, Tim & Izan's Beach Hut will have moved 100m north to a brand new location on Matawa beach. If the old spot (a long-time Lonely Planet favourite) is anything to go by, the new spot will incorporate the same colourful eco-friendly building techniques, including shell mobiles, strategically placed driftwood and Bollywood fabrics run riot. Beachside tent and sleeping-bag accommodation will still be available, and of course, surf lessons (RM60 per hour) with surf legend Tim Brent are still available. The social, loungeable Tube Café will also migrate to the new location.

### Rainbow Chalets

CHALET \$

(☎419 3140; rainbow.chalets@gmail.com; chalets fan/air-con RM40/80) Eight colourful chalets – three air-conditioned and five fan-cooled – await you at Rainbow, all with wooden porches decorated with shells and coral, and facing a particularly lovely stretch of beach. Owner Mohammad also runs a taxi service with better rates to Tekek than many other drivers.

### Riverview

CHALET \$\$

(☎419 3168; chalet/beach chalet RM100/150; 📍) Fairly chic A-frame huts have balconies directly over a lazy jungle river that winds its way to the sea. The large flat area of beach on the restaurant side has an inviting volleyball pitch and the rest of the grounds are covered in soft Japanese grass (go barefoot!). They also rent kayaks (RM30) to guests.

## GETTING TO JUARA

Juara is trickier to reach than other spots on Tioman, but oh so worth it. Though the paving of the Tekek–Juara road has technically made Juara more accessible, most taxi drivers still charge the same exorbitant (RM90 to RM120 per vehicle) pre-paved price for the 15-minute trip. A taxi boat from ABC will set you back RM150.

Though the town has a fine jetty, the east coast waves that attract surfers have thus far kept Juara from enjoying the same regular ferry service as towns on the west coast (though the Mersing Ferry sometimes stops here for four or more travellers).

Your best bet for getting here is to arrange transit with one of the hotels. If you're the hardy sort, hiking over from Tekek is definitely an option.

**Juara Beach Resort**

RESORT \$\$

(☎013-771 1137; [www.island.com.my/tioman](http://www.island.com.my/tioman); s/d/tr RM100-180; 🍷🍷) Modern rooms at this resort face a grassy garden studded with coconut palms, and the friendly management has a wide variety of vacation packages to choose from, most of which involve meals, activities and transit from Tekek. The attached restaurant – open for breakfast, lunch and dinner – is one of the best on the island. The chef cooks up an excellent variety of Chinese and Malay (and even a few Western) dishes. They also serve cold beer.

**Juara Lagoon**

CHALET \$\$

(☎419 3153; [juaralagoon@yahoo.com](mailto:juaralagoon@yahoo.com); chalets & longhouse RM100) The Juara is situated at the very far end of the southern bay, and enjoys sensational views of the bay's entire sweep. The establishment runs its own turtle sanctuary and you can hang out with Jo, a deaf and blind green turtle cared for by the centre.

**Mutiara Resort**

CHALET \$\$

(☎419 3159; [www.juaramutiararesort.com](http://www.juaramutiararesort.com); s/d/q chalets RM100/150/180; 🍷) Mutiara, just south of the jetty, has lots of options with comparably high standards.

**Mizani's Place**

CHALET \$

(☎019-792 9640; chalets RM45) Mizani's is on the southern section of beach. Its simple, old but clean bungalows have fans, mosquito nets and attached bathrooms.

**Paradise Point**

LONGHOUSE \$

(☎419 3145; s/d/q RM40/60/100) Paradise Point, north of the jetty, offers simple, homey rooms in a longhouse.

**Santai Bistro**

MALAY \$\$

(meals around RM12; ☎9am-11pm) This bar/restaurant right next to the jetty plays classic rock and serves up delights like sambal prawns (RM18), tom yum (RM12) and mixed vegetable salads (RM6). The beers are cold and the views hypnotising.

**KAMPUNG PAYA**

The short, wide, white-sand beach here is jam-packed with two resorts and a few restaurants and food shacks. The rocky seabed and shallow water make this a poor choice for swimming.

**Payabeach Resort**

RESORT \$\$

(☎in Mersing 07-799 1432; [www.payabeach.com](http://www.payabeach.com); dm incl breakfast RM40, chalets incl breakfast RM200-480; 🍷🍷🍷) Spacious chalets are linked together by wooden bridges over a

lily pond. There are also tidy, air-con four-bed dorm rooms and a restaurant, full spa, dive centre, lounge and a range of activities.

**Sri Paya Tioman Chalet**

CHALET \$\$

([www.tiomanchalet.com](http://www.tiomanchalet.com); 3d/2n including all meals and activities RM360 p/p; 🍷🍷🍷) Sri Paya Tioman Chalet was opened in 2010 and has beautiful air-conditioned chalets, an on-site dive shop and a waterfront restaurant. Package deals include meals and organised snorkelling tours.

**GENTING**

Genting caters mostly to the weekend crowds from Singapore and KL, but its surrounding local village gives it a touch of authenticity.

**Sun Beach Resort**

RESORT \$\$

(☎419 7027; [www.sunbeachresort.com.my](http://www.sunbeachresort.com.my); tw RM58-98, tr RM78-108, f RM98-118, deluxe RM158-188, ocean-view suite RM358; 🍷) Newly opened Sun Beach has beachfront chalets ranging from simple to deluxe (featuring minibars and televisions) and a great restaurant. Check the website for package deals.

**Golden Dish Café**

CHINESE \$

(dishes from RM6; ☎10am-midnight; 🍷) This might be the only place on Tioman serving their own home-grown organic vegetables. There are also plenty of authentic Chinese seafood specialties and healing herbal drinks. If that isn't your thing, they also serve up beer for RM5.

**Riverside Cafe**

MALAY \$

(dishes from RM3.50; ☎breakfast, lunch & dinner) This very inexpensive place right next to the jetty serves up burgers from RM3.5, omelets from RM2.5, and Malay and Thai specialties like *kampung* noodles (RM4.5) and tom yum (RM6).

**LEARN BATIK MAKING!**

Genting is the home of Suhadi Mahadi, whose **Suzila Batik Arts & Crafts Centre** (☎013-751 4312; [suzilabatik@gmail.com](mailto:suzilabatik@gmail.com)) is just south of the Jetty. Suhadi teaches batik making using traditional materials. Tuition varies from RM25-80: a simple batik might take an hour or two to make, while a more complex pattern might take the afternoon. Suhadi also sells ready-made Batik from RM30-1200.

## NIPAH

Blissful, isolated Nipah Beach is a long strip of white with an unusual strip of black sand running through it. A river mouth at the southern end creates a deep blue swimming hole that's bordered on one side by a large, flat knuckle of sand with a volleyball pitch. This is the place to come to hang in a hammock, snorkel or hike in the jungle.

Both Nipah's hotels are open year round, and can arrange pick up from the ferry stop in Genting for RM30 each way.

### Bersatu Nipah Chalets

LONGHOUSE \$

(☎07-797 0091, 012-655 7824; bersatunipah\_tiom@yahoo.com; r with fan/air-con RM60/90; ☼) This clean beachfront longhouse has great service (the amiable Jalil and Amy) and an excellent riverside restaurant with dishes like freshly caught fish (priced by weight), calamari fritters (RM16) and a fried rice and chicken set (RM9). The mixed grill, containing a variety of poultry, fish and meat, with fruit and fries on the side, is especially popular (RM30). Jalil also runs a free river cruise for guests.

### The Nipah Beach Tioman

CHALET \$

(☎019-735 7853; chalets from RM70) Young, friendly host Abbas runs these rustic chalets on stilts by the water's edge. They sit so close to the beach that the sound of waves lapping at the stairs will soothe you to sleep.

## MUKUT

On the southern tip of Tioman, Mukut may be the loveliest – as well as most secluded – *kampung* on the island. The beach is a tad less amazing than the one in Juara, but this is made up for by the prettiness of the town itself, with its traditional homes and flower-lined paths.

### Mukut Coral Resort

CHALET \$

(☎07-799 2612, 07-799 2535; r/chalets RM25/88; ☼) Traditional village-style chalets (all with air-con and hot water, some with TV) are set in a marvellous location beside Mukut's jetty. There's a sea-view restaurant serving Chinese and Western food.

### Mukut Harmony Resort

CHALET \$

(☎07-799 2275; chalets RM50) Has a dozen fan-cooled chalets on a strip of grass next to the jetty.

## i Information

Tioman's sole cash machine is in Tekek across from the airport and takes international cards.

It's been known to run dry, so consider getting cash in Mersing. Travellers cheques can be cashed at the Berjaya Tioman Beach, Golf & Spa Resort and there's a moneychanger at the airport. There's a small post office not far north of the Babura Seaview Resort in Tekek.

There are numerous public phones at Tekek, Air Batang (ABC) and Salang, but many are in disrepair. Only Telekom cards can be used for calls, on sale at shops around the island. The island's sole clinic is **Poliklinik Komuniti Tekek** (☎419 1880).

## i Getting There & Away

### Air

**Berjaya Air** (☎419 1309, in KL 03-7846 8228, in Singapore 02-6481 6302; www.berjaya-air.com) Has daily flights to/from KL and Singapore. Prices vary by day and season.

### Boat

Mersing in Johor is the main access port for Tioman. **Island Connection Tours** (☎799 2535; return RM70) has an office in Mersing. Other operators sell tickets by the jetty for the same price. Boats run from early morning until late afternoon, stopping at Genting, Paya, Berjaya Tioman, Tekek, ABC and Salang, returning in the reverse order on the return trip. Decide where you want to get off and tell the ticket inspector. On weekends and holidays it's a good idea to buy your tickets in advance since the boats fill quickly.

Boat departures during the monsoon season (November to February) can be erratic, with trips becoming more regular during the low monsoon months (January and February).

Ferries also depart from Tioman from the **Tanjung Gemok ferry terminal** (☎413 1997; return RM70), 35km north of Mersing near Endau (p252). This route is useful if coming from the north. Call ahead and make sure the ferries are running before you arrive.

## i Getting Around

Typical sea taxi fares from Tekek are: Salang (RM30), ABC/Panuba (RM25), Paya Beach (RM30), Genting (RM30), Nipah (RM75) and Juara (RM105). Most chalets can arrange boat charter. Expect to pay around RM600 for a full day on a boat, and expect the sea to be far rougher on the Juara side of Tioman.

If you have the time, you can explore some of the island on foot. Bicycles can be hired at guesthouses on all the main beaches (RM5 per hour).

Though the road from Tekek to Juara is now paved, most operators are still trying to get the pre-paved price of RM90 to RM120 for the relatively short ride. Bargain hard!

## Endau

📍09

There's little of interest in Endau, but fast boats speed to Pulau Tioman run from nearby **Tanjung Gemok**. If you get stuck here, you can spend the night at the **Hotel Seri Malaysia** (📞413 2723; smrom@serimalaysia.com.my; d incl breakfast RM150; 🍽️🍷) in Tanjung Gemok, a few minute's walk from Endau.

## Pekan

📍09

Pekan, the seat of the Pahang Sultanate, has a regal air and is uncommonly scenic with its wide clean streets, spacious *padang* (city square) and many grand buildings surrounded by expansive pristine lawns. There is also a collection of old Chinese shophouses along a shady river, excellent

Malaysian street food and a cluster of beautiful mosques.

The blue-domed **Sultan Abdullah Mosque** (Map p253; Jln Sultan Ahmad) is a large, slightly mouldering creation dating back to 1932. Behind the mosque stands the old **Pekan Lama** (Map p253), a tower fashioned from wood and stone. The active **Abu Bakar Mosque** (Map p253; Jln Sultan Ahmad) is further west, crowned with gold domes.

Several examples of Pekan's non-Islamic houses of worship including the tiny **Mariamman Hindu Temple** (Map p253) and the larger **Lei Shen Gong Buddhist Temple** (Map p253).

The focus of the Pekan's palm-lined royal quarter, Kampung Permatang Pauh, is the Regent of Pahang's palace, **Istana Permai** and further on, the sultan's palace, the **Istana Abu Bakar**, set in vast grounds of cow grass and adjacent to the verdant polo field of the **Royal Pahang Polo Club**.

## TASIK CHINI

Beautiful Tasik Chini (Lake Chini) is a series of 12 lakes linked by vegetation-clogged channels. Environmentalists see increasing threat to the area, one of Pahang's natural flood retention basins, as a result of decades of uncontrolled mining and logging activities. But there is much to bring travellers to this magnificent landscape, and as elsewhere in Malaysia many hope that ecotourism will motivate the government to protect this fragile landscape. See p585 for more details.

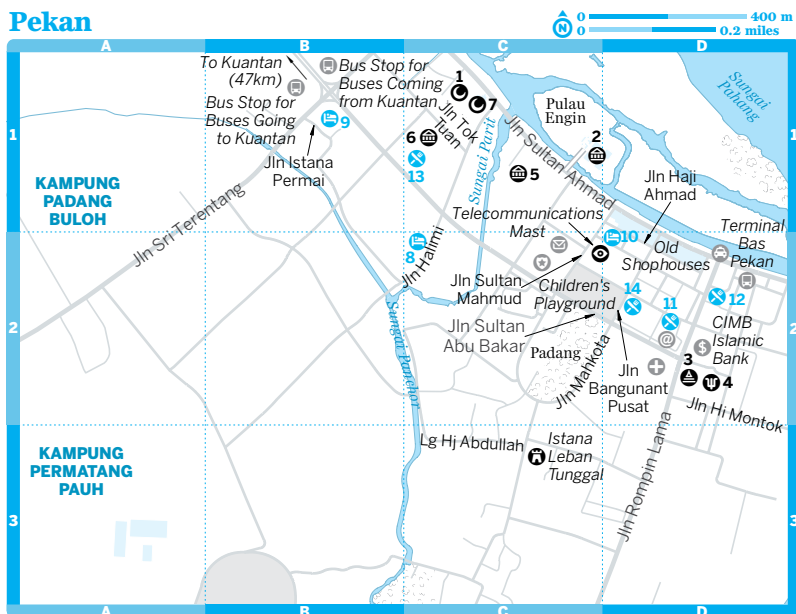
Tasik Chini's shores are inhabited by the Jakun people, an Orang Asli tribe of Melayu Asli origin, and the surrounding jungle hills are some of the least-visited trekking areas in the country, still hiding tigers and elephants amidst glorious waterfalls and caves. Locals believe the lake is home to a serpent known as Naga Seri Gumum, sometimes translated as a 'Loch Ness Monster'. The best time to visit the lakes is from June to September when the lotuses are in bloom.

Tasik Chini offers two excellent all-inclusive options for travellers. **Rajan Jones Guest House** (📞017-913 5089; r per person incl breakfast & dinner RM35) lies nestled in flower-filled Kampung Gumum and acts as base camp for the titular Rajan Jones's excellent jungle and lake adventures. Rajan speaks perfect English, is close to the Orang Asli, has been leading treks for over 20 years and can arrange a spectrum of activities from jungle trekking (three-hour trips, RM50 per person), night hikes (RM30), longer treks (RM80 per day) waterfall trips (RM75) and lake trips (RM50 to RM100). All of Rajan's tours include transport and all meals.

A less rustic option is the magnificently landscaped **Blue Chini Resort** (📞0468 8088; tasikchiniresort@hotmail.com; r from RM150, dm RM25 incl breakfast), which has beautiful rooms facing the lake, an on-site restaurant and even karaoke. Eight-bed dorms are neat and often filled with student groups. Staff at the resort can arrange all activities for you.

The easiest way to get to Tasik Chini is to arrange transport from either Lake Chini Resort or Rajan Jones. The more complicated way involves taking a bus to Kampung Chini from either Kuantan (RM7, 2 hours) or Pekan (RM6, 1½ hours) to Kampung Chini and then taking a private car the remaining 7.5km to Kampung Gumum for about RM20. You can a taxi from either Pekan or Kuantan for around RM80.

## Pekan



## Sights

### Museum Sultan Abu Bakar

MUSEUM

(Map p253; Jln Sultan Ahmad; admission RM1; ☉9.30am-5pm Tue-Thu, Sat & Sun, 9am-12.15pm & 2.45-5pm Fri) The museum is housed in a wonderful building constructed by the British in 1929. Exhibits are largely about the Pahang royal family, with other displays featuring weapons, pottery (including Chinese porcelain and Arab ceramics unearthed on Pulau Tioman) and exhibits on wildlife in Pahang.

### Galeri Pengangkutan Air

MUSEUM

(Map p253; admission RM1; ☉9.30am-5pm Tue-Thu, Sat & Sun, 9am-12.15pm & 2.45-5pm Fri) Galeri Pengangkutan Air displays traditional Malaysian watercraft. Look out for the fabulously carved craft with the head of a mythical beast.

## Sleeping & Eating

Staying a night in Pekan is a great way to shift into the low gear of small-town Malaysia. A few restaurants, **food stalls** (Map p253) and **fruit stalls** (Map p253) can be found in the grid of streets in between the Padang and Sungai Pahang and along the riverfront Jln Sultan Ahmad. Also, a handful of spicy Thai-style *ikan bakar* and tom

## Pekan

### Sights

- 1 Abu Bakar Mosque ..... C1
- 2 Galeri Pengangkutan Air ..... C1
- 3 Lei Shen Gong Buddhist Temple ..... D2
- 4 Mariamman Hindu Temple ..... D2
- 5 Museum Sultan Abu Bakar ..... C1
- 6 Pekan Lama ..... C1
- 7 Sultan Abdullah Mosque ..... C1

### Sleeping

- 8 Beach Shack Homestay ..... C2
- 9 Chief's Rest House ..... B1
- 10 Pekan Budget Hotel ..... D2

### Eating

- 11 Food Stalls ..... D2
- 12 Fruit Stalls ..... D2
- 13 Ikan Bakar & Tom Yum Restaurants ..... C1
- 14 Umi Café ..... D2

yum **restaurants** (Map p253) open for dinner along Jln Sultan Abu Bakar.

### Chief's Rest House

HISTORIC HOTEL \$

(Map p253; ☎422 6941; Jln Istana Permai; d RM55-70; ☼) This circa-1929 colonial wooden building exudes atmosphere and style, and

is reason enough to stop in Pekan. All of the rooms have wood floors, towering ceilings, TV and air-conditioning. It's located nearly 1km from the bus terminal, so let the driver know that you want to get off near the rest house.

### Beach Shack Homestay

HOMESTAY \$

(Map p253; ☎012-696 1093; 64 Jln Halimi; r RM60) Tim and Izan, who run the spectacular Beach Hut (p249) in Tioman, also operate this homestay out of their *kampung* home in Pekan. The traditionally built red-brick home features fan-cooled furnished rooms (RM60) with comfortable beds and use of a cool courtyard chill-out area. Families can rent out the whole house, which has two bedrooms, a kitchen and living room, for RM230. The couple can arrange pickup from the bus station.

### Pekan Budget Hotel

HOTEL \$

(Map p253; ☎422 3727; 40 Jln Haji Ahmad; r RM50) Nothing special, but rooms at the aptly named budget hotel are clean enough, and the location – in a row of shophouses – couldn't be more central.

### Umi Café

CHINESE, MALAY \$

(Map p253; 22 Jln Bangunan Pusat; meals RM5-10; ☎7.30am-9pm) Right across from the shady *padang* this is the most airy and pleasant place to eat in town. There's a Chinese-Malay buffet at lunch and delicious curry *pao* (RM1; steamed bun filled with meat) all day.



## Information

There's internet access at **10 Net Cyber Café** (Jln Sultan Abu Bakar; per hr RM3; ☎10am-7pm).

**CIMB Islamic Bank** (Jln Rompin Lama) has an ATM that accepts foreign cards.



## Getting There & Away

Buses leave from **Terminal Bas Pekan** (Jln Engku Muda Mansor). **Utama Express** (☎422 8694) and **Cepat Express** (☎1300-8884 2538) both have offices here. Regular local buses run to/from Kuantan (RM7, one hour), Kuala Rompin (RM7, two hours) and to Chini Village (RM6, 1½ hours). Long-distance buses run to Kuala Terengganu (RM24) and to KL (RM30).

The taxi station is at the bus station. A taxi to/from Kuantan costs RM50; to Tasik Chini it's RM60.

## Kuantan

☎09

Most travellers only stop in busy Kuantan, Pahang's capital and Malaysia's second biggest port, to break up long bus trips. We think this is a shame; while the city isn't geared towards tourism, it is definitely interesting enough to warrant a day or two's exploration, offering some of the coast's best eating opportunities. The nearby beach of Teluk Chempedak is worth visiting as well.



## Sights & Activities

### Masjid Negeri

MOSQUE

(State Mosque; Map p255; Jln Mahkota) The Masjid Negeri is the east coast's most impressive mosque; it presides regally over the *padang*. At night it's a magical sight with its spires and lit turrets.

### River Cruises

CRUISE

(Map p255; ☎512 1515; RM15) Ninety-minute river cruises run thrice daily from the jetty to the Sungai Kuantan river mouth, passing fishing villages and mangrove swamps before returning to town.



## Sleeping

Kuantan has a host of new mid-priced hotels ranging from merely nice to charming, so unless you're on a serious budget it's worth splurging.

### Classic Hotel

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$

(Map p255; ☎516 4599; chotel@tm.net.my; 7 Jln Besar; d incl breakfast RM92-98; ☎☎) All rooms here (ask for a river view) are spacious and clean, with large bathrooms and all the mod-cons. Central location, ample Malay-style breakfast and considerate staff make this a great choice.

### Seasons Boutique Hotel

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$

(Map p255; ☎516 3131; seasonsboutiquehotel@gmail.com; 2-8 Jln Besar; r from RM100; ☎☎) Bright coloured walls and Zen-style furniture makes this a chic choice, though rooms are small and many are windowless. There's a spa offering reflexology and a big restaurant serving Malay and Western food.

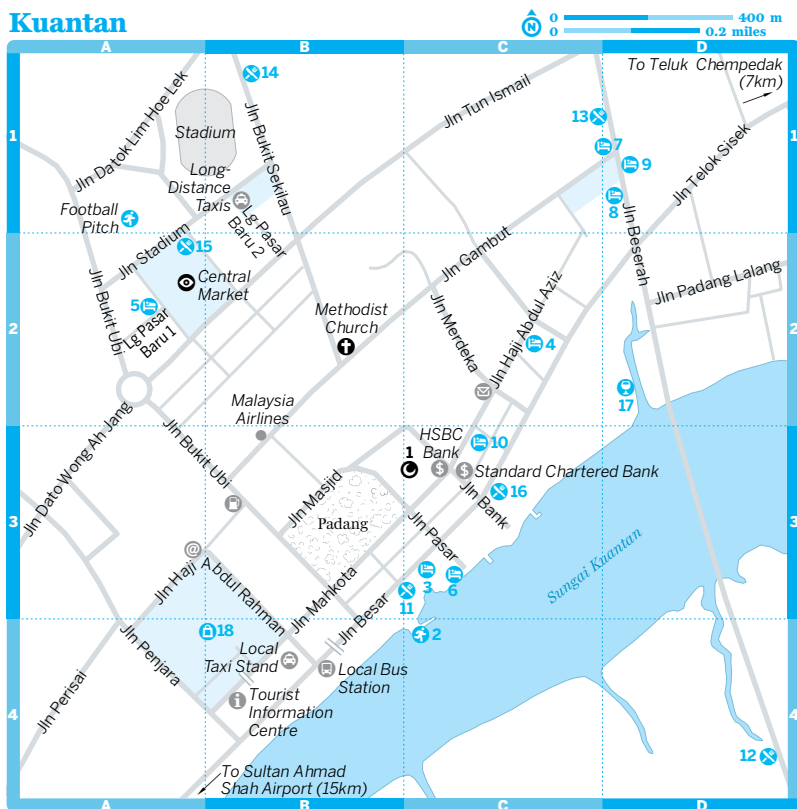
### Mega View Hotel

BUSINESS HOTEL \$\$

(Map p255; ☎517 1888; Lot 567, Jln Besar; r RM150-350; ☎) More atmosphere than the other hotels in town thanks to its direct riverfront position and lots of natural light in the



## Kuantan



PAHANG &amp; TIOMAN ISLAND KUANTAN

## Kuantan

## Sights

- 1 Masjid Negeri..... C3

## Activities, Courses &amp; Tours

- 2 River Cruises ..... C4

## Sleeping

- 3 Classic Hotel..... C3  
 4 Hotel Kosma ..... C2  
 5 Hotel Makmur ..... A2  
 6 Mega View Hotel ..... C3  
 7 MS Garden Hotel..... D1  
 8 Seasons Boutique Hotel ..... D1  
 9 Signature Hotel ..... D1  
 10 Tai Wah Hotel ..... C3

## Eating

- 11 Akob Patin House ..... C3  
 12 Ana Ikan Bakar Petai..... D4  
 13 Berjaya Megamall..... C1  
 14 East Coast Mall ..... B1  
 15 Food Stalls..... A2  
 16 Kohng Restoran..... C3

## Drinking

- Alfresco Bar ..... (see 6)  
 17 O's Corner Cafe ..... D2

## Shopping

- 18 Kuantan Parade Mall..... B4

lobby areas. Opt for a standard executive to get a balcony and uninterrupted river view. The RM165 family rooms are a great deal if you're travelling with kids.

## MS Garden Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p255; ☎555 5899; [www.msgarden.com.my](http://www.msgarden.com.my); Lot 5 & 10, Lg Gambut, off Jln Beserah; r incl breakfast from RM330; \*@@@) Still Kuantan's poshest

hotel, the newly remodelled MS Garden has big rooms, a fitness centre and even a pool with waterslides. Regular walk-in specials can bring the price down to as low as RM250.

### Signature Hotel

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$

(Map p255; ☎513 2919; signaturehotel2012@gmail.com; 41 Jln Besar; s/d RM68/98; 🍷@🍷) This good budget choice has clean rooms with mod-cons and adorable counter staff.

### Hotel Kosma

HOTEL \$

(Map p255; ☎516 2214; 59 Jln Haji Abdul Aziz; s/d RM55/70; 🍷@🍷) Among the better of the budget choices, the ageing Kosma lacks the boutique vibe of some of the newer mid-priced hotels but is centrally located.

### Tai Wah Hotel

HOTEL \$

(Map p255; ☎517 8285; 29 Jln Haji Abdul Aziz; r RM30-48; 🍷) This Chinese-run hotel has spartan doubles, singles and triples with beds and TVs – it's pretty much what you'd expect for the price. Cheaper rooms are fan cooled, more expensive ones have air-con.

### Hotel Makmur

HOTEL \$

(Map p255; ☎514 1363; 14 & 16 Lg Pasar Baru 1; r RM35-88; 🍷) Dull, functional and close to the bus station pretty much sums this joint. But if you need central lodging on the cheap, Hotel Makmur will do. Cheaper rooms have shared bathrooms.

## Eating & Drinking

Kuantan's most distinctive dish is *patin* (silver catfish). The **Berjaya Megamall** (Map p255) and the **East Coast Mall** (Map p255) have everything from Délifrance and Starbucks to Malay-style food courts. The **food stalls** (Map p255) by the long-distance bus station are particularly excellent.



### Ana Ikan Bakar Petai

SEAFOOD \$\$

(Map p255; Tanjung Lumpur; 🍷lunch and dinner) If it's authentic you're after, look no further than this huge open-air seafood restaurant across the river on the island of Tanjung Lumpur. On any given evening Malaysian families flock here to feast on a plethora of traditional Malay seafood dishes. An extraordinary selection of freshly caught fish, crab and shrimp is priced by weight and cooked to your specifications in small kitchens along the side of the dining area, while a larger kitchen in the back prepares traditional Malaysian rice and noodle dishes. No beer is needed here – an amazing assortment of fresh juices is available for whistle wetting.

### Akob Patin House

MALAY \$

(Map p255; Jln Besar; 🍷lunch) Fancy trying *patin*, the local delicacy? This riverfront place serves both wild caught (RM20) and farmed (RM8) *patin* in a *tempoyak* (fermented durian sambal) sauce served buffet-style with other Malay-style meat and vegetable dishes – the price is per fish. The friendly staff can help explain what's what.

### Kohng Restoran

CHINESE \$

(Map p255; 9 Jln Teluk Sisek; 🍷6pm-3am) This humble spot on the main drag serves some of the best Hainan chicken rice (RM10) this side of Singapore. On some nights the place is so packed that diners spill out into the alley next door, where a variety of other Chinese snacks are cooked well into the wee hours. Kohng can't be beat for cheap beer.

### O's Corner Cafe

BAR

(Map p255; Jln Teluk Sisek; 🍷Mon-Sat 4pm-12am, Sun 2pm-12am) This riverside bar and restaurant swings with an in-house DJ. The bar has a wide variety of beers, both bottled and on tap, and a huge selection of juices and other nonalcoholic beverages.

### Alfresco Bar

BAR

(Map p255; Mega View Hotel, Lot 567, Jln Besar) This venue sits right next to the river, at the rear of the Mega View Hotel (p254). It's a relaxing venue, with ambient music and a huge TV screen for live sports events.

## Information

Lots of banks (many with 24-hour ATMs) are on or near the aptly named Jln Bank. You'll find wi-fi in most hotels. There are internet cafes at the Berjaya Megamall (p256) and East Coast Mall (p256). **Espikey Internet** (Jln Haji; 🍷8am-11pm) is on the ground floor of a food court just north of **Kuantan Parade Mall** (Map p255).

**Post Office** (Jln Haji Abdul Aziz)

**Tourist Information Centre** (☎516 1007;

Jln Mahkota; 🍷8am-1pm & 2-5pm Mon-Thu, 8am-12.45pm & 2.45-5pm Fri) Has particularly helpful staff and a range of useful leaflets.

## Getting There & Away

### Air

**Malaysia Airlines** (☎1 300-88 3000; Jln Gambut, ground fl, Wisma Persatuan Bolasepak Pahang) has daily direct flights to KLIA with plenty of onward connections from there. **Firefly** (☎03-7845 4543) also has two daily flights to/from Subang Airport in KL and four weekly flights to Singapore. The airport is 15km away from the city; a taxi should cost RM20.

## Bus

Long-distance buses leave from the station on Jln Stadium. The ticket offices, food court and left luggage centre (RM2 per piece) are on the 2nd floor of the building.

Buses for Pekan (RM5.30), Balok (RM3), Bese-rah (RM3) and Cherating (bus 27; RM5) depart from the local bus station on Jln Besar but sometimes let off next to the central market.

Destination	Price	Duration
Kuala Lumpur	RM24	4hr
Singapore	RM30	6hr
Jerantut	RM18	3.5hr
Mersing	RM16	3hr
Kuala Lipis	RM24	6hr
Melaka	RM27	6hr
Temerloh	RM12	2hr
Butterworth	RM51	8.5hr
Kuala Terengganu	RM17	4hr
Kota Bharu	RM31	6hr

## Car

**Hawk** (☎538 5055; www.hawkrentacar.com.my; Sultan Ahmad Shah Airport, Kuantan)

## Taxi

The **long-distance taxi stand** is in front of the long-distance bus station on Jln Stadium. Destinations and approximate cost (per car): Pekan (RM60), Mersing (RM200), Johor Bahru (RM380), Cherating (RM80), Kuala Terengganu (RM200), Jerantut (RM200) and KL (RM260). Prices may vary, and bargaining is possible.

## Around Kuantan

Light waves crash on the shore of **Teluk Chempedak** while several **walking tracks** wind along the park jungle area at this strip of coast 6km east of Kuantan. There's also a small, strangely un-gated **zoo** about a kilometer out of town. From November to around February the beach break here becomes surfable; surfboards are rented for RM50/100 per hour/day from the Gandom Club next door to the Hyatt Regency.

The **Hyatt Regency Kuantan** (☎518 1234; www.kuantan.regency.hyatt.com; r from RM340; ♿♿♿♿) is a spacious, breezy and effortlessly luxurious place, with amenable staff, lovely views and a solid list of amenities: two pools (one with a swim-up bar), two very good restaurants, two tennis courts, a spa, a children's play area and a water sports centre with catamarans and kayaks, and

a surfer's area, to name a few. Rooms are sumptuous and a whole bevy of activities are on offer, including walks along the cliffs to Methodist Bay. Discounts are available both online and on weekdays.

About 200m from the beach are a series of guesthouses, all of which are pretty decent and comparably priced. **The Pine Beach Hotel** (☎013-940 4458; s/d/f incl breakfast RM50/60/120; ♿♿) is clean and has newish rooms with air-con, TVs and hot-water showers. Ground floor rooms are windowless, but otherwise OK. Another good place is **Anjung Selesa** (☎568 4191; s/d/tr/f incl breakfast RM50/60/65/120; ♿♿). Prices rise by RM10 at weekends.

There is no public bus service between Kuantan and Teluk Chempedak. A taxi between the two towns costs RM15.

## Cherating

☎09

A sweeping white beach bordered by coconut palms and a small village of guesthouses and shops with more monkeys, monitor lizards and cats walking around than humans, Cherating is a popular spot for surfing and general beachfront slacking.

## 👁 Sights & Activities

### Water Sports

Some of Malaysia's best surfing waves pound the beaches at Cherating and other spots to the north. Several places in town rent out surfboards for around RM20 per hour and you can get surf lessons at **Satu Saku** (Map p259; Main Rd; ☺November-March).

The Cherating beach isn't great for snorkelling but places all around town offer half-day **snorkelling tours** (RM50) to the aptly named Coral Island. There are also **fishing tours** (prices on demand) and you can rent **kayaks** (sea or river, per hr RM20) to cruise around on your own.

### Wildlife Viewing

Night-time firefly boat tours along the mangroves upriver are a Cherating activity par excellence. The best tours are led by Hafiz, a long-time firefly enthusiast and self-made expert at **Cherating River Activities** (Map p259; ☎017-978 9256; http://hafizcheratingactivities.blogspot.com/; Main Rd; tours per person from RM20). Several places around town run river mangrove tours, turtle-watching (April to September), walks and other activities.

The **Turtle Sanctuary** (entry by donation; ☺9am-5pm Tue-Sun) next to Club Med has a few basins with baby and rehabilitating sea turtles, and can offer information about the laying and hatching periods.

### Other Sights & Activities

Batik-making is another Cherating specialty. **Matahari Chalets** (Map p259; ☎581 9835; small/large chalets RM25/35) and **Limbong Art** (Map p259; Main Rd) both offer courses (from RM25) where you can make your own batik handkerchief or sarong. You can also take riding lessons, either in the paddock or trotting along the beach, at the well-kept **Penn Equestrian Club** (Map p259; ☎012-282 9265; Main St, next to Holiday Villa; per hr RM100).

### Sleeping

Budget digs tend to fill up with surfers during the monsoon surf season from November through January, and midrange places tend to fill up on the weekends; book in advance.

**TOP CHOICE** **Villa de Fedella** CHALET \$\$  
(Tanjong Resort; Map p259; ☎010-2675 667; tanjunginn@hotmail.com; d/f chalets with air-con RM170/250, d/tr chalets with fan RM70/85; 🍷🍷🍷) This highly recommended place offers wooden chalets with decks set around a stunning lake surrounded by tall grass and fruit trees. All chalets have hot showers, and there's an excellent lending library in the reception area. Villa de Fedella is run by a lovely local family who'll make your visit to Cherating memorable.

**TOP CHOICE** **Club Med** RESORT \$\$\$  
(☎581 9133; www.clubmed.com.sg; all-incl package per night per person from RM550; 🍷🍷🍷) Crafted to look like a particularly beautiful

Malaysian *kampung* with wooden buildings on stilts, the resort comes fully equipped with its own stretch of beach, immaculate sprawling lawns, international restaurants, nightclub, kids' club, nearby turtle sanctuary and sports facilities. Contact the hotel for standard package deals.

**Cherating Bayview Resort** CHALET \$\$  
(Map p259; ☎581 9248; http://cheratingbayviewresort.blogspot.com; r with fan RM70, chalets with air-con RM135-260; 🍷🍷🍷) The Bayview, styled like a southern Californian apartment complex, is in the centre of town and has chalets that will fit up to four people; chalets are equipped with hot showers, TVs and living areas. There's also children's playground, swimming pool and restaurant.

**Ruby's Resort** RESORT \$\$  
(☎016-938 1298; www.rubys-resort.com; d RM70; chalets incl breakfast from RM180; 🍷🍷) Ruby's offers a series of colourful wooden cabins with panelled interiors, comfortable double beds, hot showers and TVs. All chalets have lovely balconies, and the 10-bed dorm is air-conditioned.

**Maznah's Guest House** CHALET \$  
(Map p259; ☎581 9072; chalets incl breakfast RM30-35) Spirited kids happily chase chickens around the collection of sturdy wooden bungalows here. The owners speak little English and *nasi lemak* is served for breakfast, making this a great, friendly place to go local.

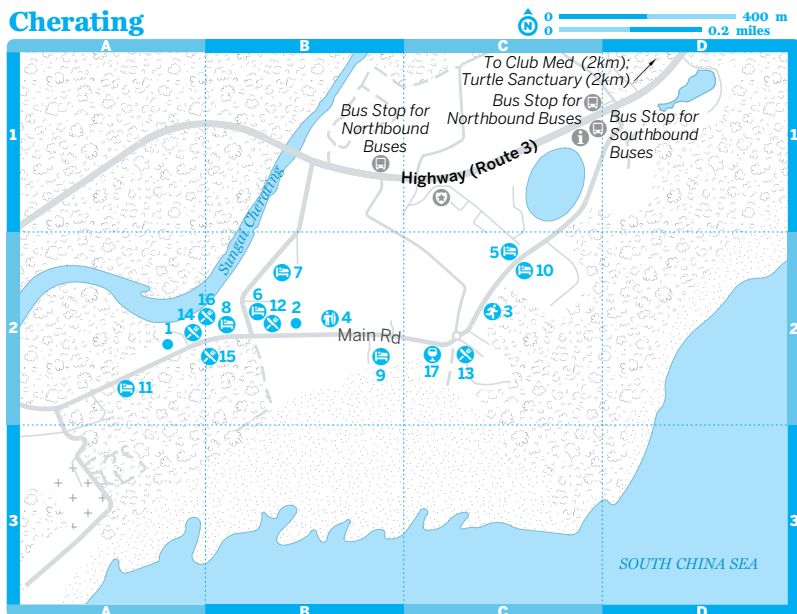
**Payung Guesthouse** CHALET \$  
(Map p259; ☎581 9658; d/quad chalets RM50/70; 🍷) This excellent, friendly main-drag choice backs onto the river, with neat rows of ordinary chalets in the garden. The attached tour office offers everything from bike and

## CAVE OF THE SLEEPING BUDDHA

Twenty-six kilometres north of Kuantan the limestone karst containing **Gua Charas** (Charas Caves; RM1) towers high above the surrounding palm plantations. The caves owe their fame to a Thai Buddhist monk who came to meditate here about 50 years ago. A steep climb up a stairway leads to the colossal **Sleeping Buddha Cave** (Wofu Dong), decorated with small altars to *Kuanyin Puxian*, other Bodhisattvas and Buddhist idols. The main attraction is the Sleeping Buddha in the rear of the cavern.

A taxi from Kuantan to the caves costs RM40, or you can take the Sungai Lembing-bound bus 48 (RM3, one hour) from the local bus station in Kuantan and get off at the small village of **Panching** just past the sign reading 'Gua Charas 4km'. You can walk or get someone in Panching to give you a lift on a motorcycle for RM2.

## Cherating



## Cherating

### Activities, Courses & Tours

- 1 Cherating River Activities ..... A2
- 2 Limbong Art ..... B2
- 3 Penn Equestrian Club ..... C2
- 4 Satu Saku ..... B2

### Sleeping

- 5 Cherating Bayview Resort ..... C2
- 6 Matahari Chalets ..... B2
- 7 Maznah's Guest House ..... B2
- 8 Payung Guesthouse ..... B2
- 9 Ranting Beach Resort ..... B2

- 10 Residence Inn ..... C2
- 11 Villa de Fedella ..... A2

### Eating

- 12 Cherating Cottage Café ..... B2
- 13 Duyong Restaurant ..... C2
- 14 Matahari Restaurant ..... A2
- 15 Nabill Café ..... B2
- 16 Payung Restaurant ..... B2

### Drinking

- 17 Don't Tell Mama ..... C2

surfboard rentals to mangrove or snorkelling tours.

### Ranting Beach Resort

CHALET \$\$

(Map p259; ☎581 9068; chalets RM120-180; 🏠) The best chalets here are the wooden fan-cooled ones right on the busiest strip of the beach. More expensive chalets have air-con, and a four room house that sleeps ten can be rented out for RM600.

### Residence Inn

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p259; ☎581 9333; <http://ric.my/cherating/>; r/chalet incl breakfast RM248/268; 🏠🍳🚰) Surrounding a good swimming pool, the newly

remodelled, crisp and modern rooms here are a decent choice. Service is great, there's a big restaurant and promotional rates from RM180 are often available.

## Eating & Drinking

Most guesthouses run their own restaurants, the best being **Matahari Restaurant** (Map p259; seafood barbecue from RM10; ☺breakfast, lunch & dinner) at the west end of town. The **Cherating Cottage Café** (Map p259; breakfasts around RM5; ☺breakfast, lunch & dinner) is the first to open in the mornings (around 8am) and serves good breakfasts.

**Nabill Café**

(Map p259; meals around RM6; ☺dinner) Eat where the locals do and save a handful of ringgit. Choose your fresh seafood then watch it get grilled in a delicious spicy sambal.

MALAY \$

**Duyong Restaurant**

(Map p259; meals RM15; ☺lunch & dinner) Raised on stilts at the western end of the beach, this place offers unbroken views around the bay. There's a large selection of seafood, steaks, poultry and vegetables, but it's the setting that is superlative. Try the tom yum (hot and spicy Thai seafood soup, RM8).

MALAY \$\$

**Payung Restaurant**

(Map p259; meals from RM17; ☺breakfast, lunch & dinner) Off the main road against the quiet riverside, this semi-outdoor hang-out serves thin-crust pizzas and a selection of pastas (all from RM17). There's often groovy music playing and a friendly extended family to hang out with.

WESTERN \$\$

**Don't Tell Mama**

(Map p259; ☺till late) Don't Tell Mama, located right on the beach, is the hippest bar in town and is a great place to stop by day or night to make friends over a cold beer. Impromptu barbecues and parties are the norm.

BAR

**i Information**

There are no banks in Cherating, so be sure and get cash in Kuantan or Pekan. **Yahya** (☎014-210 2973) dispenses information from the **Payung Guest House**.

**i Getting There & Away**

From Kuantan's local bus station catch a bus marked 'Kemaman' and ask to be dropped at Cherating (look for a sign by the road that reads 'Pantai Cherating'). Buses leave every 30 minutes (RM5, one hour). When coming from the north, any bus heading for Kuantan will drop you on the main road. A taxi from Kuantan should cost about RM80.

From Cherating to Kuantan, wave down a Kuantan-bound bus from the bus stop on the highway (Route 3). For taxis from Cherating call the **Cherating Taxi Service** (☎581 9355). Expect to pay around RM55 for a ride to Kuantan and RM280 for a trip to Taman Negara.

**Taman Negara**

Taman Negara blankets 4343 sq km (from Pahang to Kelantan and Terengganu) in shadowy, damp, impenetrable jungle. Inside

this buzzing tangle, ancient trees with gargantuan buttressed root systems dwarf luminescent fungi, orchids, two-tone ferns and even the giant rafflesia (the world's largest flower). Hidden within the flora are Asian elephants, tigers, leopards and rhinos, as well as smaller wonders such as flying squirrels, but these animals stay far from the park's trails and sightings are extremely rare. Even if they do come close, the chances are you'll never see them through the dense jungle. What you might see are snakes (dog-toothed cat snakes, reticulated pythons, temple pit vipers and red-headed kraits), lizards, monkeys, small deer, abundant birdlife and perhaps tapir. Nearly everyone who visits Taman Negara gets an up-close and personal meeting with leeches and an impressive array of flying and crawling insects.

The more time you put into a visit to Taman Negara, the more you'll get out of it. Though they're feasible, fleeting visits only scratch the surface. Consider an overnight trek or at least a long boat-trip up one of the park's rivers. Whether coming for an afternoon hike or a multiday trek, you'll need to buy a permit (park entrance/camera/fishing RM1/5/10) from either of the tour operators at the Tourist Information Counter (p265).

At the time of research there was talk of raising the price of entry to Taman Negara substantially. Though nothing has been set, figures between 30RM and 90RM are being floated.

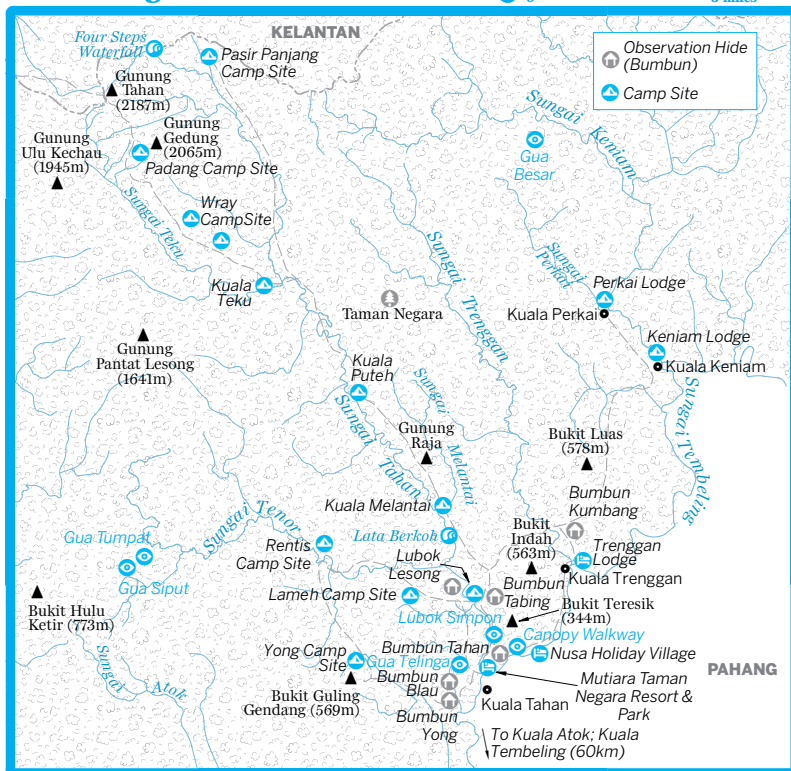
The park headquarters and the privately run Mutiara Taman Negara Resort (p263) are at Kuala Tahan at the edge of Taman Negara National Park; other accommodation and restaurants are across Sungai Tembing at Kampung Kuala Tahan. River taxis buzz between the two sides of the river (RM1 each way) throughout the day.

**GUIDES & TOURS**

Guides who are licensed by the Wildlife Department have completed coursework in forest flora, fauna and safety. Often the Kuala Tahan tour operators offer cheaper prices than those available at the Tourist Information Counter at Park Headquarters (whose guides are licensed), but talk with these guides first to find out what training they've had. Guides cost RM180 per day (one guide can lead up to 12 people), plus there is a RM100 fee for each night spent out on the trail.



# Taman Negara



Many travellers sign up for tours to an Orang Asli settlement. Tribal elders give a general overview and you'll learn how to use a long blowpipe and start a fire. While local guides insist that these tours provide essential income for the Orang Asli, most of your tour money will go to the tour company. A small handicraft purchase in the village will help spread the wealth.



## Activities

Trekking brings folks here, a wide variety of possibilities – from an hour's stroll to nine arduous days up and down 2187m-high Gunung Tahan – exist. You can shorten your hiking time in most cases by taking river bus services or tours that include boat transport.

The trails around the park headquarters are convenient but heavily trafficked. Relatively few visitors venture far beyond the headquarters, and longer walks are much less trammelled.

## Treks from Kuala Tahan

Easy-to-follow trails around park HQ are signposted and marked with approximate walking times; enquire at the information office for details on other routes.

### Canopy Walkway & Around

SHORT HIKE

(adult/child RM5/3; ☀10am-3.30pm Sat-Thu, 9am-noon Fri) This is easily the area's most popular hike. It begins past the park headquarters and leads along Sungai Tembeling to the canopy walkway, 30 minutes away. The walkway is suspended between huge trees and the entire circuit takes around 40 minutes.

From behind the canopy walkway a trail leads to Bukit Teresik (344m), from the top of which are fine views across the forest. The trail is steep and slippery in parts, but is easily negotiated and takes about an hour up and back. You can descend back along this trail to the Mutiara Taman Negara Resort or,

near the canopy walkway, take the branch trail that leads across to Lubok Simpon, a swimming area on Sungai Tahan. From here it is an easy stroll back to park headquarters. The entire loop can easily be done in three hours.

Past the canopy walkway, a branch of the main trail leads to Bukit Indah (563m), another steep but rewarding hill-climb offering fine views across the forest and the rapids in Sungai Tembeling.

### Kuala Trenggan

DAY HIKE

The well-marked main trail along the bank of Sungai Tembeling leads 9km to Kuala Trenggan, a popular trail for those heading to the Bumbun Kumbang hide. Allow five hours. From here, boats go back to Nusa Holiday Village (p264) and Kampung Kuala Tahan, or it's a further 2km walk to Bumbun Kumbang. An alternative longer trail leads inland, back across Sungai Trenggan from Bumbun Kumbang to the camp site at Lubok Lesong on Sungai Tahan, then back to park headquarters (six hours). This trail is flat most of the way and crosses small streams. Check with park headquarters for river levels.

### Lata Berkoh

DAY HIKE

North from park headquarters, the trail leads to Gunung Tahan, but you can do an easy day walk to Lata Berkoh, the cascading rapids on Sungai Tahan. The trail passes the Lubok Simpon swimming hole and Bumbun Tabing, 1¼ hours from Kuala Tahan. There is one river crossing before you reach the falls, which can be treacherous if the water is high; do not attempt the river crossing in high water – you should hail one of the boatmen waiting on the opposite side to ferry you across.

### Kuala Keniam

DAY HIKE, MULTIDAY HIKE

A popular walk is the trail from Kuala Trenggan to Kuala Keniam. It's normally done by chartering a boat to Kuala Keniam and then walking back to Kuala Trenggan (six hours). The trail is quite taxing and hilly in parts, and passes a series of limestone caves. This walk can be combined with one of the Kuala Tahan–Kuala Trenggan trails to form a two-day trip, staying overnight in the Trenggan Lodge or at Bumbun Kumbang. It is also possible to walk from Kuala Keniam to the lodge at Kuala Perkai, an easy two-hour walk.

## Gunung Tahan

MULTIDAY HIKE

Really adventurous travellers climb Gunung Tahan (2187m), the highest peak in Peninsular Malaysia, 55km from park headquarters. It takes nine days at a steady pace, although it can be done in seven. A guide is compulsory (RM700 for seven days plus RM75 for each day thereafter). With no shelters along the way, you have to be fully equipped. Try to organise this trek in advance so you don't have to hang around park headquarters for a couple of days.

### Rentis Tenor

MULTIDAY HIKE

From Kuala Tahan, this trek takes roughly three days. Day one: take the trail to Gua Telinga, and beyond, for about seven hours, to Yong camp site. Day two is a six-hour walk to the Rentis camp site. On day three cross Sungai Tahan (up to waist deep) to get back to Kuala Tahan. It's roughly a six hour walk, or you can stop over at the Lamah camp site, about halfway.

### Fishing

Anglers will find the park a real paradise. Fish found in the park's rivers include the superb fighting fish known in India as the *mahseer*, but here as the *kelasa*.

Popular fishing rivers include Sungai Tahan, Sungai Keniam (north of Kuala Trenggan) and the remote Sungai Sepia. Simple fishing lodges are scattered through the park and can be booked at park headquarters. The best fishing months are February, March, July and August. Fishing permits are RM10; Rods can be hired across the river for between RM20 and RM30 per day.

## GEAR HIRE

Leeches are everywhere inside the park (but are rarely found in Kampung Kuala Tahan). Wearing boots with gaiters or long socks tucked over your trousers and doused in DEET will make hiking more pleasant.

You can hire camping, hiking and fishing gear at the Mutiara Taman Negara Resort's shop or at several shops and guesthouses on the Kampung Kuala Tahan side. Asking prices per day are around RM8 for a sleeping bag, RM10 for a rucksack, RM25 for a tent, RM20 for a fishing rod, RM5 for a sleeping pad, RM8 for a stove and RM8 for boots.

## River Bus & Boat Trips

The Mutiara Taman Negara Resort has daily boats that go upriver to Kuala Trengganu at 10am and 2.30pm. In the reverse direction, boats leave Kuala Trengganu at 11.15am and 3.15pm. These services are intended for guests only, but the trips into the park below are open to the public.

### ROUND TRIP BOAT JOURNEYS FROM MUTIARA TAMAN NEGARA DOCK

Destination	Price	Trips	First Boat
Bunbun Yong	RM5	3 daily	8.30am
Canopy Walkway	RM15	2 daily	10.15am
Gua Telinga	RM15	4 daily	8.30am
Kuala Tembeling	RM30	1 daily	9am

## Sleeping

### KUALA TAHAN

**Mutiara Taman Negara Resort** RESORT \$\$  
(☎266 3500, in KL 03-2145 5585; www.mutiarahotels.com; camp site RM5, dm/guesthouse/chalets/bungalows incl breakfast RM60/300/470/1800; 🚻🚻) Conveniently located right at park headquarters, there's a huge range of accommodation here from OK guesthouse rooms (all with garden terraces) to colonial-style family and honeymoon suites in wooden chalets and clean, eight-person dorms with air-con. Campers accepted in groups of 10 or more.

### KAMPUNG KUALA TAHAN

Kampung Kuala Tahan, directly across the river from park headquarters, is where most of Taman Negara's lodging, restaurants and shops are found. Better places fill up quickly. Having spent decades as base camp for hordes of travellers has given Kuala Tahan something of an over-touristed 'banana pancake/backpacker trail' vibe, so if that isn't your style then consider entering the park through the less-travelled back entrance in Kelantan.

### Yellow Guesthouse

GUESTHOUSE \$

(☎266 4243; dm/d RM70/80; 🚻🚻) Up and over the top of the hill (behind the school) the Yellow Guesthouse consists of a single story house and a two-storey building cleaner and in better shape than most of the others. All rooms have hot showers; The building across from the main house has slightly

larger rooms, but both have brightly painted walls and new mattresses and the owner is super-friendly and helpful.

### Tahan Guesthouse

GUESTHOUSE \$

(☎266 7752; dm/d RM10/50) Far enough from 'town' to feel away from it all but close enough to be convenient, Tahan Guesthouse has excellent four-bed dorms and even better, colourfully painted bright rooms upstairs. The whole place feels like a happy preschool with giant murals of insects and flowers all over the place.

### Mat Leon Village

CHALET \$\$

(☎013-998 9517; dm/chalets RM50/120 incl breakfast) This boasts a supreme forest location with river views, a good restaurant and free boat pick-up from the Kampung Kuala Tahan jetty. On foot go past Durian Chalet for around 350m to the sign at the edge of the forest; follow the forest path for 200m and you will see the chalets on the far side of a small stream.

### Tembeling Riverview Lodge

LODGE \$

(☎266 6766; www.trvtamannegara.blogspot.com; dm/d/tr RM10/50/60) Straddling the thoroughfare footpath, this place has fan cooled rooms with cold showers and mosquito netting and a pleasant communal areas overlooking the river. Staff is friendly, and there's a lovely restaurant serving roti John (RM6; a Malaysian sandwich made with local bread, meat, cheese and vegetables) as well.

### Durian Chalet

CHALET \$

(☎266 8940; http://durian-chalet.blogspot.tw; dm/d/f RM10/40/50) About 800m outside of the village (beyond the Teresek View Hotel) in a flowery garden between rubber and durian plantations, this family-run forest hideaway enjoys a good reputation, though we weren't able to review it during our last trip.

### Dakilih House

HOTEL \$

(☎010-919 3658, 014-292 7069; camping RM5; d RM15, r RM50-80) Festive and colourful outside and in, Dakilih house sits on a hill overlooking the river a few minutes from the information center. Cheaper rooms have shared bathrooms. There's a cute little restaurant that serves breakfast, lunch and BBQ from RM25-40. Camping is also available for RM5.

### Teresek View Motel

MOTEL \$

(☎019-970 6800; mr8seasons@gmail.com; chalets RM50-60, r RM70-90; 🚻) You can't miss this

eyesore of a cement building in the 'centre' of Kuala Tahan. The good rooms in the main building are tiled, clean and have hot-water bathrooms and terraces, but lack the homey feel of the family-run places elsewhere.

### Agoh Chalets

CHALET \$

(☎266 9570; d/f RM50/80; ㊦㊧) Chalets here are made from concrete modelled to look like logs and all surround a shady garden in the middle of the village.

### Rainforest Resort

HOTEL \$\$

(☎266 7888; www.rainforest-tamanegara.com; d/ste incl breakfast from RM207/414; ㊦㊧㊨) Slightly behind town away from the river. The rooms are clean though somewhat generic.

### Akhi Chalet

CHALET \$

(dm/d/chalet RM13/60/90; ㊦) Nice looking chalets and decent dorm rooms surrounding a leafy garden. The staff don't speak any English.

## SOUTH OF KAMPUNG KUALA TAHAN

Several peaceful places lie removed from the action west off the main Kampung Kuala Tahan-Jerantut road south of Kampung Kuala Tahan.



### Traveller's Home

GUESTHOUSE \$\$

(☎266 7766; www.travellershome.com.my; d incl breakfast RM160, chalet incl breakfast & dinner RM185, family chalets RM300; ㊦㊧㊨) This bright and airy place, around 1km down a turn-off 2km south of Kuala Tahan (look for the signs), has impeccable, friendly service that will make you feel instantly at home. Rooms here are very new (with balcony) and there's a handy book and DVD library and internet access (per hour RM4), plus all-day free coffee, tea and soft drinks. Chalets are more private and luxurious, and are nestled in the garden's many fruit trees. Free shuttles to Kampung Kuala Tahan are available on demand. This is an excellent choice for families, offering three family rooms that will fit up to four.

### TRV Motel & Lodge

MOTEL \$\$

(☎127-984 7043; www.trvtamanegara.blogspot.com; d RM150, fan-cooled q RM100; ㊦) TRV is operated by the same people who run the Tembeling Riverview Lodge (p263), with more upscale lodgings than the Tembeling a bit further out of town. Free shuttles in and out of town are available.

### Park Lodge

CHALET \$

(☎017-983 2074; www.parklodge.nurnilam.com; fan d RM38, incl breakfast RM50) This quiet spot has eight chalets and a restaurant hidden away down a dirt track around 500m south of Kuala Tahan. Staff can drive guests to Kampung Kuala Tahan.

## NUSA HOLIDAY VILLAGE

About a 15-minute boat ride upriver from park headquarters, **Nusa Holiday Village** (☎266 3043, in Jerantut 09-266 2369, in KL 03-4042 8369; www.tamanegara-nusaholiday.com.my; camp sites RM5, dm/A-frames/cottages/houses RM15/55/90/110) is more of a 'jungle camp' than anything. The isolation paired with the staff's general lack of English skills makes this a difficult place to stay unless you're on a packaged itinerary (three-days and two-nights from RM295 per person). The double cottages are the best value, while the cheaper A-frames are literally falling in on themselves. The restaurant serves good but unexciting food. Camping costs RM15, tent included.

## KUALA PERKAI & KUALA KENIAM

The Kuala Keniam Lodge (located about an hour's boatride upstream from Kuala Trengganu) and Kuala Permai (a further two hours' walk past Kuala Keniam) are both officially closed and do not offer lodging; however, people still do camp there. If camping at either of these places, bring your own tent.



## Eating

Floating barge restaurants line the rocky shore of Kampung Kuala Tahan, all selling the same ol' cheap basic noodle and rice meals plus bland Western fare. All are open from morning until late, though most take rest breaks between two and four.

**Mama Chop** (meals around RM7), at the far northern end of the strip, serves Indian vegetarian banana-eaf meals at lunchtime and has very good clay-pot dishes for dinner.

At **Wan's Floating Restaurant** (meals around RM8) you'll find some of the best *kue teow* (flat noodles) in town; a large bowl of *hailam kue teow* (RM12), or noodles with chicken and gravy will hit the spot.

**Family Restaurant** serves a dish called *kerabu* (RM5), a finely diced meat and vegetable dish with a light lemongrass sauce that's got way more local cred than the standard banana pancakes. They also serve banana pancakes.

For something a bit more luxurious head to **Seri Mutiara Restaurant** (Mutiara Taman Negara Resort; ☺breakfast, lunch & dinner), which has salads (from RM16), sandwiches/burgers (from RM20), pizza (RM30), local dishes and a small kiddies' menu (from RM10). Breakfast (American/buffet RM30/40) is filling. This is also the only place in the area where you can get a beer.

## Information

Daily **video shows** (☺9:30am, 3pm, 8:45pm) on Taman Negara are shown in the exhibition hall at the Mutiara Taman Negara Resort/park headquarters and at the NKS Restaurant in Kampung Kuala Tahan. The exhibition hall at the Mutiara also has informative displays on the park.

For health care, the **Poliklinik Komuniti** (Community Clinic) is adjacent to Agoh Chalets in Kampung Kuala Tahan, opposite the school.

## Internet

**Internet Cafe** (per 10 min RM1; ☺8am-midnight) Just down from the Teresek View Motel.

**Internet Cafe** (per hr RM6) At Agoh Chalets. The internet wasn't working on our last visit.

## Police

**Police Station** (☎266 6721) Located 300m up from the Teresek View Motel.

## Tourist Information

**Information Centre** (☺9am-11pm) The centre is at the riverside end of the road in Kuala Tahan. It provides information on onward transport and tours, although some of the staff are more helpful than others.

**Tourist Information Counter** (permit: park entrance/camera/fishing RM1/5/10; ☺8am-10pm Sun-Thu, 8am-noon & 3-10pm Fri) Register here before heading off into the park. The counter, located in the building behind the Mutiara Taman Negara Resort's reception, also offers park information and guide services.

## Getting There & Away

Most people reach Taman Negara by taking a bus from Jerantut (p265) to the jetty at Kuala Tambling, then a river boat from here to the park. However, there are also popular private minibus services that go directly to/from several tourist destinations around Malaysia directly to/from Kampung Kuala Tahan. **Han Travel** (☎012-674 9208; www.taman-negara.com), **NKS** (☎03-2072 0336) and **Banana Travel & Tours** (☎017-902 5952; Information Centre, Kampung Kuala Tahan) run several useful private services, including daily buses to KL (RM35), a bus/boat combination (RM70) and minibuses to Penang (RM120), the Perhentian

Islands (RM165 including boat) and the Cameron Highlands (RM95). These minibuses can also drop you off en route anywhere in between.

You can also walk into or out of the park via Merapoh, at the Pahang-Kelantan border. The trail from Merapoh joins the Gunung Tahan trail, adding another two days to the Gunung Tahan trek. Guides are compulsory and can be hired in Merapoh to take you in. Popular and reputable travel guide **Zeck** (☎743 1613), from Zeck's Traveller's Inn (p277) in Kota Bharu, can arrange a trip into the park from Kelantan that will definitely take you well off the beaten path.

## Boat

The 60km boat trip from Kuala Tembling (18km north of Jerantut) to Kuala Tahan takes two to three hours, depending on the level of the river. It's a beautiful journey and a highlight for many visitors.

Boats (one way, RM35) depart daily at 9am and 2pm (9am and 2.30pm Friday). Extra boats are laid on during the busy season, and service can be irregular from November to February. Boats are run by the Mutiara Taman Negara Resort (p263) and Nusa Holiday Village (p264). On the return journey, regular boats leave Kuala Tahan at 9am and 2pm (2.30pm on Friday).

## Jerantut

☎09

This small town is the gateway to Taman Negara, and most travellers do little more than spend a night here before heading into the jungle (perhaps stocking up on booze at one of the Chinese owned liquor stores on Jln Diwangsa before heading to dry Kuala Tahan). However, the town is pleasant enough to spend an afternoon.

## Sleeping

Most places offer luggage storage, are open 24 hours and can arrange transport to Taman Negara. Hotels can get very busy around July and August.

### Sakura Castle Inn

HOTEL \$

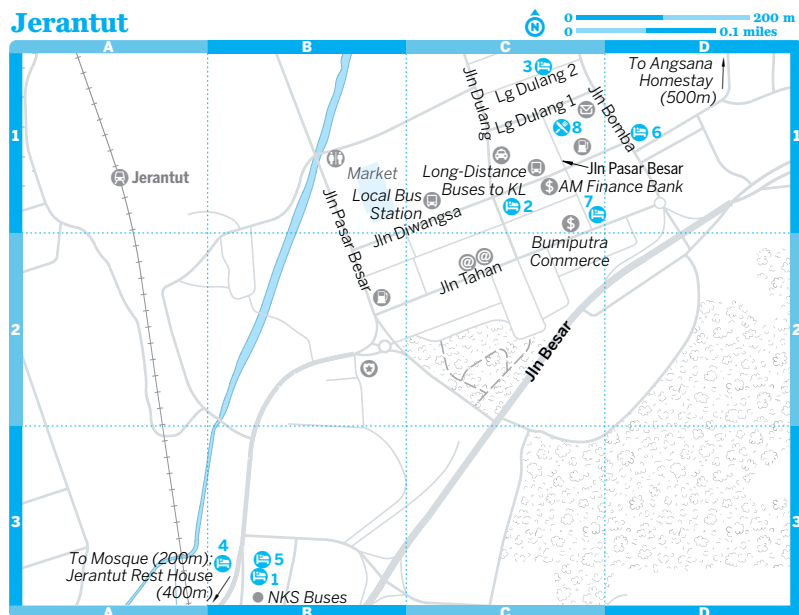
(Map p266; ☎266 5200; sakuracastleinn@yahoo.com; 51-52 Jln Bomba; d RM55-85, f RM95; ☺☺) This is the classiest place in town (but maybe not for long – a new hotel was months away from completion at the time of research) and has clean, comfortable rooms all with TVs, hot water and air-con. There's also free wi-fi.

### Greenleaf Traveller's Inn

HOTEL \$

(Map p266; ☎267 2131; 3 Jln Diwangsa; dm RM10, d RM20-30; ☺☺) A quiet choice with simple,

# Jerantut



## Jerantut

### Sleeping

- |                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| 1 Chong Heng Hotel .....          | B3 |
| 2 Greenleaf Traveller's Inn ..... | C1 |
| 3 Hotel Chet Fatt .....           | C1 |
| 4 Hotel Sri Emas .....            | B3 |
| 5 NKS Hostel .....                | B3 |
| 6 Sakura Castle Inn .....         | D1 |
| 7 Town Inn Hotel .....            | C1 |

### Eating

- |                     |         |
|---------------------|---------|
| 8 Food Stalls ..... | C1      |
| NKS Café .....      | (see 5) |

clean rooms and dorms, owned by a sweet lady and her family, Ms Teh also runs a travel agency and can help you plan your trip to Taman Negara.

### Chong Heng Hotel

HOTEL \$

(Map p266; ☎2663 693; 24 Jln Besar; s/d/tr RM20/20/28; @) Run by an interesting fellow named Tan, this budget hotel is located in a lovely renovated shophouse on Jerantut's prettier east side. Fan cooled rooms are clean, comfortable and have shared bathrooms with hot-water showers. The ground floor is taken up by a small and colourful shop with brightly painted walls and antique birdcages.

### Town Inn Hotel

HOTEL \$

(Map p266; ☎266 6811; www.towninnhotel.com; Jln Tahan, Lot 3748; d/tr/q RM48/65/85; @@@) Bright clean rooms here are a big step-up from the backpacker oriented places. Service is friendly.

### Angsana Homestay

HOMESTAY \$

(☎267 2131; Jln Sri Angsana 3B, Lot 85; r with bathroom RM60; @@) A homestay in the newer area of town, about five minutes from the town centre, managed by the same nice family who run the more centrally located Greenleaf Traveller's Inn (p265). Rooms here are larger and airier than those at the inn, and there's a communal living room.

### Hotel Chet Fatt

HOTEL \$

(Map p266; ☎266 5805; 177 Jln Diwangsa; dm/d with shared bathroom RM10/20; @) If you arrive late at night you can stumble across the street from the bus station to this place with window-less rooms, internet terminals and free filtered water.

### Hotel Sri Emas

HOTEL \$

(Map p266; ☎266 4499; tamanegara@hotmail.com; 46 Jln Besar; dm/tr/f RM8/21/64, d without shower RM15-35, d with shower RM38; @@) Fan doubles with shared hot-water bathrooms have saggy mattresses, but are clean. Pricier



rooms are bigger and have attached bathrooms and air-con. There's an internet terminal downstairs.

## Eating

On Jln Pasar Besar there are excellent **food stalls** (Map p266) specialising in tom yum, while cheap *kedai kopi* (coffee shops) serving Chinese food and Malay favourites are scattered around town.

### NKS Café

MALAY, WESTERN \$\$

(Map p266; NKS Hostel; 21-22 Jln Besar; meals RM10; ☎7.30am-9pm, closes 6pm low season) Serves mediocre Western breakfasts, Malay staples, *dou fu* (tofu) meals, sandwiches and beer. It's popular with backpackers, especially as it's the departure point for tours and buses.

## Information

Several banks in town can change cash and travellers cheques (change money before heading into Taman Negara). The ATMs do dry up sometimes so it's best to get money before reaching Jerantut.

**AM Finance Bank** (Jln Diwangsa; ☎9.30am-4pm Mon-Fri & 9.30am-noon Sat) Has an ATM that accepts most foreign cards, including Visa.

**Bumiputra Commerce** (Jln Tahan; ☎9.30am-4pm Mon-Fri & 9.30am-noon Sat) The ATM accepts MasterCard and Cirrus.

**Internet** (11 Jln Tahan, 1st fl; per hr RM3; ☎9am-5pm)

**Internet Café** (NKS Hostel; per hr RM5; ☎24hr)

**Police** (☎266 2222; Jln Besar)

## Getting There & Away

### Bus

Long-distance buses leave from the ticket offices near the taxi stand. **Perwira Ekspres** (☎266 3919) and **SE Ekspres** (☎266 3188) both have offices here. Local buses depart from the station not far away on the same street.

Destination	Price	Duration
Kuala Lumpur	RM20	4hr
Kuantan	RM16	4hr
Kuala Lipis	RM5	1.5hr
Temerloh	RM6	1.5hr

**NKS Hostel** (Map p266; 21-22 Jln Besar; d with/without shower incl breakfast RM50/35) arranges minibuses and buses to a variety of destinations, including Tembeling jetty (RM5), KL (RM40), Perhentian Island jetty (RM65),

Kota Bharu (RM65) and the Cameron Highlands (RM65). Buses leave from the NKS Café (p267). NKS can also help you to arrange your ongoing river trip to the national park from the jetty in Kuala Tembeling. If you want to skip the riverboat, their minibuses goes directly from Kuala Tahan (RM25) at 8.30am and 1pm, returning 8am and 7.30pm.

Public buses go to the jetty at Kuala Tembeling (RM2, 45 minutes), for the boat to Taman Negara every hour from 7.45am to 5pm, although schedules are unreliable and don't necessarily coincide with boat departures.

### Taxi

Taxi fares are as follows: Kuala Tembeling (RM20), Kampung Kuala Tahan (RM65), Temerloh (RM50), Cherating (RM240), Kuala Lipis (RM65), KL (RM200) and Kuantan (RM180). A surcharge of RM30 is enforced after 3pm.

### Train

**Jerantut train station** (☎266 2219) is on the Tumpat-Gemas railway line (also known as the jungle railway). All northbound trains go via Kuala Lipis and Gua Musang.

Two express trains run daily to Singapore (2am, 12.30pm), via Johor Bahru. For KL Sentral, take the 12.30am express; there are four trains for Kuala Lipis.

For an up-to-date timetable and list of fares, consult **KTM** ([www.ktmb.com.my](http://www.ktmb.com.my)).

## Kuala Lipis

☎09

At the confluence of the Lipis and Jelai rivers, Kuala Lipis is a bustling little town with a charming colonial-era centre of Chinese shophouses. A large percentage of the population is Chinese or Indian, with the common language between them being English, so it's easy to chat with these particularly friendly locals and find your way around.

Lipis was a gold-mining centre long before the British arrived in 1887, but the town's heyday began in 1898 when it became the capital of Pahang. Grand colonial buildings date from this period, and trade increased when the railway came through in 1924. In 1957 the capital shifted to Kuantan and Kuala Lipis went into decline. The somewhat less charming 'New Town' is across the river from the old centre.

## Sights & Activities

It's a launching pad for visits to the nearby Kenong Rimba State Park, but Kuala Lipis

also draws people for its lovely colonial-era architecture.

Maroon and white and decorated with arches, the noble **District Offices** are located off Jln Lipis on a hill 1km south of town centre. The offices overlook the exclusive **Clifford School**, a grand public building that began life as the Anglo-Chinese School in 1913. During the occupation, the school served as the headquarters of the Kempetai (the Japanese secret police).

The road next to the school leads up the hill to the black-and-white wooden **Pahang Club**, off Jln Lipis, a stately and dignified bungalow with wide, open verandahs.

A very pleasant walk starts on the road behind the Lipis Centrepoint Complex. Follow the road up the hill where the sign says 'Driving Range Lipis'. You will soon pass the **Istana Hinggap** on your right; keep going uphill and the road forks. Take either branch and you will be led to a series of colonial-era houses, some in the process of being reclaimed by jungle.

If you're in town on Friday evening, be sure to visit the excellent **night market** in the parking lot next to the bus station.

A taxi around town for an hour to see costs RM25.

## Sleeping, Eating & Drinking

There are busy and popular food stalls on either side of the northern end of the overhead walkway crossing Jln Pekeliling.

**Centrepoint Hotel & Apartments** HOTEL \$  
(☎312 2688; Jln Pekeliling, Lipis Centrepoint; economy s/d RM48/70, deluxe d from RM108; 🏠🚰) One floor of this high-rise hotel is dedicated to mediocre economy rooms, while the rest of the place has more comfortable standard rooms. It's the busiest place in town and has a tour office (specialising in trips to Kenong Rimba), great service and a bustling food court down stairs. There's also free breakfast and wi-fi.

**Residence Rest House** HISTORIC HOTEL \$\$  
(☎312 2788; r RM60-150; 🏠) This huge, homey colonial hilltop house once housed the British Resident; rooms here are massive with floral wallpaper, big windows and garden grounds. The restaurant is only open for dinner and a taxi to town costs RM7.

**D'Valley Inn** HOTEL \$  
(☎312 5868; 44 Jln Bukit Bius; r RM78-98; 🏠🚰) D'Valley, located behind the high-rise Centrepoint, has clean, newly refurbished

rooms. The management also offers bicycle rentals (RM5/25 per hour/day).

**Appu's Guesthouse** GUESTHOUSE \$  
(☎013-945 9766, 312 3142; jungleappu@hotmail.com; 63 Jln Besar, Hotel Lipis; dm/q RM10/60, d RM20-35; 🏠) Appu's is great for tourist info and guide services, but it's very rundown. Locks on the doors don't work well so lone women may not feel safe here.

**Hotel London** HOTEL \$  
(☎312 1618; 82 Jln Besar; r RM38/43; 🏠) Plain rooms in a refurbished Chinatown shop-house. Cheaper rooms have shared bathroom, and all have air-conditioning.

## Information

Hand-drawn maps of Kuala Lipis are available at Appu's Guesthouse. There are a few banks with ATMs on Jln Besar and the post office is east of the train station.

**Kiara Holidays** (☎3122 777; www.kiaraholidays.com; 4th floor, Centrepoint Hotel) Kiara plans tours all over the area, including white-water rafting and canoe trips down the Sungai Kesong and treks into Taman Negara and Kenong Rimba. Call or check their website for current trips and deals.

## Getting There & Away

Buses run from the **bus station** (☎312 5055) in New Town to KL (RM15, 4.5 hours), Kuantan (RM26, six hours), Temerloh (RM16, one hour), Raub (RM5, 1.5 hours) and Gua Musang (RM16, 1.5 hours), from where you can catch onward buses to Kota Bharu.

Three trains run to Singapore (2.15am, 8.15am and noon) and one per day runs to KL (midnight). Trains bound for Singapore, KL or Gemas stop at Jerantut (for Taman Negara). Several local ('jungle') trains connect daily to Wakaf Bharu, the closest station to Kota Bharu.

Taxis leave from the bus station for KL (RM180), Jerantut (RM65), Kuala Tahan (RM50), Gua Musang (RM120), Temerloh (RM100) and Kuantan (RM200).

## **Kenong Rimba State Park**

☎09

A sprawling area of lowland forest rising to the limestone foothills bordering Taman Negara, this 120-sq-km forest park can be explored on three- or four-day jungle treks organised from Kuala Lipis. It's a much less-visited alternative to Taman Negara. Sightings of big mammals are rare but expect to see monkeys, wild pigs, squirrels, civets and

possibly nocturnal tapir; the park is also a prime destination for bird-watching. The park is also home to the Batek people, an Orang Asli tribe.

Visitors need to acquire a permit from the **Kuala Lipis District Forest Office** (☎312 1273). Guides are compulsory for entry to the park and can be arranged in Kuala Lipis. **Appu** (☎312 2619) of Appu's Guesthouse in Kuala Lipis does tours for RM80 per person per day plus RM200 (minimum three people) for the boat to and from Jeti Tanjung Kiara.

Tours include food, guide and all expenses in the park, but they are no-frills jungle experiences – you camp in the park, with all equipment and meals provided. Trips go when enough people are interested – it's best to get a group together yourself.

You can also book similarly priced trips through Kiara Holidays (p268) in Kuala Lipis.

## Getting There & Away

Access to Kenong Rimba is from Kuala Lipis on southbound local trains to Batu Sembilan (Mile 9). From Batu Sembilan, hire a boat (per person RM25) to Jeti Tanjung Kiara, just across the river from Kampung Kuala Kenong.

## Raub

☎09

*Raub* is Malay for scoop, which makes sense as this colonial town was built around a gold mine in the waning days of British Malaya. It's a pretty little town, boasting colonial-era charm and architecture along with one of our favorite restaurants in Pahang.

## Sights & Activities

Like nearby Kuala Lipis, Raub also has both lovely colonial-era architecture and a more traditional *kampung* (village) feel on the outskirts. Raub is also a great base for exploring the nearby Sungai Pasu Recreation Centre, the Jeram Besu Rapids and the Bukit Telaga Waterfalls.

## Sleeping & Eating

**Rumah Rehat Raub** HISTORIC GUESTHOUSE \$\$ (Raub Guesthouse; ☎355 9899; rumahrehat.ipsb@gmail.com; Jln Dato Abdullah; d/sts RM120/200; 🍽️🍷) This historic guesthouse occupies the spacious grounds of a former colonial-era mansion. It features lovely rooms and a top-notch information centre.

## Hotel Jelai

HOTEL \$

(☎013-983 1626; 35 Jln Tan Tiong; d RM88, deluxe RM108; 🍽️🍷) The Raub branch of this chain hotel can be found easily by its candy-striped pink and red exterior. It's generic, but not in a bad way.

## Hotel Seri Raub

HOTEL \$

(☎355 0888; Jln Dato Abdullah; r from RM80; 🍽️🍷) Rooms here are comfortable if a bit plain.

## Hotel Tai Tong

HOTEL \$

(☎356 1053; Jln Dato Abdullah; r fan/air-con RM35/40; 🍽️🍷) This is one of the better of a few budget places across from the bus station. Rooms all have TV and hot shower.



## Restoran Ratha Raub INDIAN, MALAY \$\$

(Jln Tun Razak; fish head curry for two RM36; 🍽️🍷 Lunch & Dinner) Don't let the withered-looking fish head staring up from the buffet tray scare you – it's just for show. Though there are other dishes on the menu, what brings people here from as far away from KL is Ratha's kari kepala ikan Raub (Raub's famous fish head curry). All orders are prepared fresh and served in a metal tureen of fiery curry, green chilli, string beans, local eggplant and a special variant of light tofu that's been puffed with air and, of course, the split head of a large red snapper out of which tender bone-free cheek meat just spills. Ratha's also sells boxed 'curry in a hurry' home preparations.

## Restoran Sentosa

CHINESE SEAFOOD \$\$

(Jln Padang; dishes by weight; 🍽️🍷 Dinner) Sentosa specialises in whole fish prepared in a more Chinese fashion, and served in a variety of ways – hot pot and grilled are quite popular. The building – a 100-year-old round pavilion with stained glass windows – is worth a visit alone. Expect to spend upwards of RM 50 for a meal here.

## Sun Yen Cheong

CAFE \$

(Jln Tun Razak; 🍽️🍷 breakfast and lunch) This traditional Chinese-Malaysian coffee shop is bursting with customers every morning.

## Information

Travel information is available from the friendly folks at Rumah Rehat Raub. There are several banks in town (some even sell gold), including an **HSBC** (Jln Tun Razak) with an ATM that accepts foreign cards.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS IN RAUB

Raub's Bukit Koman gold mine is a source of controversy, and multiple large-scale protests have been mounted by both Malaysian environmentalists and locals who claim to have been directly affected by cyanide used in a mining process called 'cyanide leach mining'. For the casual visitor, there should be no danger of cyanide poisoning from a short stay in Raub.

The negative impact of the area's other two major industries – palm oil and timber – are more noticeable. Trucks carrying timber roll through town with noisy regularity, and much of what was once jungle outside of Raub has been transformed into palm-oil plantations. See p588 for more information on the environmental challenges facing Pahang.

### Getting There & Away

Raub's bus station is on Jln Dato Abdullah. A number of companies, including **Transnasional** (☎355 1342) and **MARA** (☎355 1622), run several buses daily between Raub and KL (RM10, four hours), Kuantan (RM21, four hours) and Bentong (RM4, 1 hour). A few buses also run to Kuala Lipis (RM5, 1 hour).

Taxi drivers tend to congregate at the bus station, offering rides to destinations all around Pahang.

something of an old colonial garden party atmosphere.

### **E Station Cafe**

JAPANESE \$

(Jln Pak Sako 1; RM6-21) Come on, admit it – after weeks of *mee sup* and laksa, you're craving some sushi. Well, this is the place to get it, with fish brought in fresh from markets in KL and Kuantan. Best deal is the *chirashi* (RM21), three kinds of fresh fish over vinegar rice.

## Temerloh

☎09

An old town on the banks of the enormous Sungai Pahang, Temerloh has hints of colonial style and a colourful Sunday market. As the main city of central Pahang, it serves as a transport hub. The bus station is in the centre of the shop-and-restaurant filled new town (which is just a few minutes walk from the old) The train station is 12km away at Mentakab, a thriving satellite of Temerloh with a bustling nightly market.

Temerloh is a fairly satisfactory place to chill, especially if you're craving some modernity after a few days in the jungle. Budget lodgings seem limited, but there are a few mid-price options.

### Sleeping & Eating

#### **Hotel Green Park**

HOTEL \$

(☎296 3333; www.greenpark.com.my; Jln Terkukur, off Jln Merbah; r from RM83; 🏠🍽️) This tall hotel towers over the town and offers clean, pretty rooms with hot showers and coffee and tea making facilities.

#### **Rumah Rehat Temerloh**

GUESTHOUSE \$\$

(☎296 3218; Jln Hamzah; d RM100; 🏠🍽️) This government-run hotel is located in a colonial building east of the city centre. Carpeted rooms are well appointed, and there's

### Getting There & Away

#### **Bus**

**Terminal Bas Utama Temerloh** (Jln Sudirman) is where you'll find buses to various spots on the peninsula.

Destination	Price	Duration
Kuala Lumpur	RM10	3hr
Kuantan	RM12	2hr
Kuala Lipis	RM16	3hr
Jerantut	RM6	1.5hr
Melaka	RM17	4hr
Penang	RM55	6hr

Taxis from the bus station go to Mentakab (RM10), Jerantut (RM38), Kuantan (RM95) and KL (RM150).

## Around Temerloh

### Sights

#### **Kuala Gandah Elephant Conservation Centre**

WILDLIFE RESERVE, THEME PARK

(☎279 0391; www.wildlife.gov.my/webpagev4\_en/bhg\_ekogandah.html; Kuala Gandah, Lanchang; entry by donation; ☀10am-4.45pm, video 1pm, 1.30pm & 3.45pm daily, also 12.30pm Sat & Sun) The Kuala Gandah Elephant Conservation Centre is the base for the Department of Wildlife and National Parks' Elephant Relocation Team,

which helps capture and relocate rogue elephants from across Southeast Asia to other suitable habitats throughout the peninsula, such as at Taman Negara. Most of the elephants at the centre are work elephants from Myanmar, India and Thailand.

Visitors to Kuala Gandah are first shown a video about the elephant's plight, then can watch and join in while the handlers wash down and feed the big guys fruit (2pm Saturday to Thursday, 2.45pm Friday). Next everyone is herded a central area where visitors can, for an additional fee, ride older elephants and bathe with baby elephants. While the mission of the park is noble, animal rights activists criticise the circus-like activities at the centre, which they claim are neither enjoyable for the animals nor in line with animal welfare principles. Our advice? Come and see the elephants, buy and distribute the various pachyderm treats on sale to your (and their) heart's content. But shun the rides and group bathing sessions.

### Deerland

ZOO

(☎013-967 6242; www.deerland.org; 67 Jln Zabidin; entry adult/child RM10/5; ☀10.30am-5.30pm Sat-Thu, medicinal herb jungle treks RM35 per person; reserve at least a day in advance) Deerland is a mini petting zoo in the forest with three species of deer that you can feed and pet. The deer are kept in reasonable sized enclosures, and don't seem all that unhappy with regular attention from travellers bearing carrots (sold by park management). There are also

rabbits, peacocks, ostriches, and a fairly wide variety of birds living in the park, as well as a massive python that you can pose with for a memorable photo. The team here also leads 2½-hour medicinal herb jungle treks that include lunch and an adventurous river crossing along a network of swinging ropes. Similar treks lasting up to three days can also be arranged.



### Sleeping & Eating

**Buman Suri Biopurpose Resort** HOMESTAY \$  
(☎013-377 3838; d RM50) Family-run Buman Suri Biopurpose Resort offers accommodation in a basic *kampung*-style house on the roadside.

### Saudi's Cafe

MALAY \$

(meals RM4) Saudi's Cafe, on the grounds of the Kuala Gandah Elephant Conservation Centre (p270), serves simple Malay grub like nasi goreng and *mee sup* (noodle soup).



### Getting There & Away

These two sites are located about 150km east of KL near the town of Lanchang west of Mentakab. Most people visit on tours (including a visit to Kuala Gandah and Deerland), available from KL, Jerantut, Cherating and other tourist hubs on the peninsula. The most cost efficient way to visit the two is to combine a visit with your return trip to KL from Taman Negara with Han Travel (p265) in either their KL or Kuala Tembeling offices.

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